

"LITTLE GIRL"—A Somewhat Different Love Story

The MART SET

*A Magazine of
Cleverness*



In this Number:

"When Fancy Leaves the Narrow Path"

A Complete Novelette

APRIL, 1915

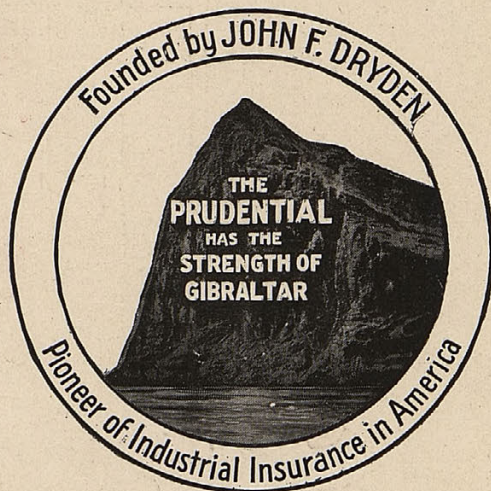
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THE SMART SET

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HALF A HUNDRED BURLESQUES, EPIGRAMS, POEMS, SHORT SATIRES, ETC.

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VISTAS

By Odell Shepard

AS I walked through the dream-peopled streets
Of the wind-rustling, elm-shaded city
Where all of the houses were friends
And the trees were all lovers of her,
The spell of its old enchantment
Was woven again to subdue me
With magic of flickering shadows,
Blown branches and leafy stir.

Street after street, as I passed,
Lured me and beckoned me onward,
Releasing like flowery fragrance
Remembrance and hope on the air.
At the end of each breeze-blurred vista
She seemed to be watching and waiting,
With leaf shadows over her gown
And sunshine gilding her hair.

For there was a dream that the kind God
Withheld, while granting us many.—
But surely, I think, we shall come
Sometime, at the last, she and I,
To the heaven He keeps for all tired souls,
The quiet suburban gardens
Where He himself walks in the evening
Beneath the rose-dropping sky,
And watches the balancing elm-trees
With a sob of delight for their beauty,
And hears through their lofty arches
The night breeze ruffle by.

THE DREAM OF KING KARNA-VOOTRA

By Lord Dunsany

KING KARNA-VOOTRA sitting on his throne commanding all things, said, "I very clearly saw last night the queenly Vava-Nyria. Though partly she was hidden by great clouds that swept continually by her, rolling over and over, yet her face was unhidden and shone, being full of moonlight.

"I said to her 'Walk with me by the great pools in many-gardened, beautiful Istrakahn where the lilies float that give delectable dreams; or, drawing aside the curtain of hanging orchids, pass with me thence from the pools by a secret path through the else impassable jungle that fills the only way between the mountains that shut in Istrakahn. They shut it in and look on it with joy at morning and at evening when the pools are strange with light, till in their gladness sometimes there melts the deadly snow that kills upon lonely heights the mountaineers. They have valleys among them older than the wrinkles in the moon.

"Come with me thence or linger with me there and either we shall come to romantic lands which the men of the caravans only speak of in song; or else we shall listlessly walk in a land so lovely that even the butterflies that float about it when they see their images flash in the sacred pools are terrified by their beauty, and each night we shall hear the myriad nightingales all in one chorus sing the stars to death. Do this and I will send heralds far from here with tidings of thy beauty; and they shall run and come to Sëndara and men shall know it there who herd brown sheep; and from Sëndara the rumor shall spread on, down either bank of the holy river of Zoth, till the people that make wattles in the plains shall hear of it and sing; but the heralds shall go northward along the hills until they come to Sooma. And in that golden city they shall tell the kings, that sit in their lofty, alabaster house, of thy strange and sudden smiles. And often in distant markets shall thy story be told by merchants out from Sooma as they sit telling careless tales to lure men to their wares.

"And the heralds passing thence shall come even to Ingra, to Ingra where they dance. And there they shall tell of thee, so that thy name long hence shall be sung in that joyous city. And there they shall borrow camels and pass over the sands and go by desert ways to distant Nirid to tell of thee to the lonely men in the mountain monasteries.

"Come with me even now for it is Spring."

"And as I said this she faintly yet perceptibly shook her head. And it was only then I remembered my youth was gone, and she dead forty years."



WHEN FANCY LEAVES THE NARROW PATH

By Helen Jetmore Major

A DÈLE WADE was lonely. She always felt lonely when parted from George, even for a few days. Their honest and undisguised devotion was the one idyl in a set where marital contentment was the exception rather than the rule. They had been boy and girl sweethearts, and their wedding on Adèle's eighteenth birthday, a hugely attended, somewhat gaudy affair, had only been postponed until then—so, at least, said all the tea-table newsmongers—because George was poor and Adèle had not yet come into her money. That money—and there was a very respectable pile of it—was poured into her lap by a much-relieved guardian and executor on her birthday, and she chose the same day to confer it upon the lord and master of her dreams.

A common enough arrangement. The bridegroom furnished the family and position and the bride furnished the capital. But in this case it had turned out a good deal better than usual. George's folks, a bit sniffish at first, soon fell in love with Adèle as he had done. She was a dainty little thing, a fragile pink-and-white beauty with an appealing and charming manner, and her obvious devotion to George carried away all lingering doubts. This devotion, if anything, increased with the passing years, for Adèle thrived in the atmosphere of appreciation that surrounded her. She was so plainly delighted with her lot that there was something contagious about it. Everybody liked her. Everybody was glad to see her so happy.

George, on his part, quite measured

up to her devotion. He was a gallant and light-hearted lover, but at the same time he was a shrewd and hard-headed American business man, and so Adèle's money kept increasing under his hands. Now, at thirty-seven, he was a recognized figure in Wall Street and his name had begun to appear in connection with deals and enterprises of a considerable magnitude. It was some such deal, in fact, that was responsible for his present absence. He and Adèle, as was their custom, had gone to Massachusetts to spend September with the Edward Russells, and he had been suddenly called back to New York. A pleasant crowd was gathered at the Russells' place, hidden there among the gorgeous autumn hills, and it was with lamentations on both sides that George had taken himself away, two weeks before the party was to break up.

He had been gone now a week, and Adèle sighed dolefully as she thought of the seven more days that must drag by before she would see him again. She was in the great hall of the big Georgian house, snuggling back among the cushions on the built-in settee, her slim feet in their soft satin slippers stretched out toward the log fire which burned in the grate. The rest of the party were still upstairs. A wistful smile hovered about Adèle's lips as she thought that, had she been dressing for a particular man, it would have taken her as long as it was taking the others.

"What's the matter, Adèle? You look as if you'd lost your last friend."

She turned at the question and saw

half a dozen laughing faces watching her from the landing above.

"Lonesome, Adèle?" asked another of the girls. "We've been here for ages, and you haven't moved."

"She misses George," suggested Elinor Macey, a tall brunette, as she began to descend the stairs. "If I thought I could love any man after fifteen years as you do George, I'd get married to-morrow. 'Fess up! You were thinking of George, now weren't you?"

Adèle burrowed deeper among the cushions.

"Guilty, on every count," she acknowledged, laughing lightly. "I *was* thinking of George, and I was lonesome. I'm so used to having him around that I feel positively lost without him. I've half a mind to go up to town."

"Oh, Adèle, you don't mean it? Surely you are not serious."

Quick protests greeted her idle words. She had spoken without actual thought of leaving, but it now occurred to her that there was nothing to prevent her joining George. She sprang to her feet, excitement lighting her face.

"Girls," she exclaimed, clapping her hands, "that is just what I *am* going to do. I'll leave the first thing in the morning."

In vain her friends tried to dissuade her. The more they talked the more determined she became. When Grace Russell, late and breathless, finally came down to add her protest, Adèle had definitely made up her mind.

"Louise," she said, as her maid was unhooking her gown that night, "don't stay up packing. I'll leave early, so that I can call by the office for Mr. Wade. You and the trunks can follow on a later train."

In accordance with this plan, when she reached the Grand Central Station late in the afternoon, she entered a taxicab and gave her husband's office address. This would take her much out of her way home, but it meant seeing George an hour earlier. It was a long ride, but, happy in her anticipations, she didn't mind it. Telling the chauffeur

to wait, she hastened to her husband's suite. In the outer office she met Mr. Mooney, the manager, with whom she was a great favorite. He came forward delightedly.

"Mrs. Wade!" he exclaimed, beaming upon her. "I thought you were still in Massachusetts. It's pleasant to see you back. What can I do for you?"

Adèle extended a slender, white-gloved hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Mooney," she said gaily. "I'm afraid it's Mr. Wade I want to see to-day. Now, *don't* tell me he's engaged."

Mr. Mooney's face fell.

"Now, that's too bad," he declared. "Mr. Wade's not here."

"Not here?" echoed Adèle, dismayed. "I wanted to surprise him. When will he be back?"

Mr. Mooney shook his head.

"I don't know. He's not been near the office for three days. He finished up that Staten Island business more quickly than we expected, and, since there was nothing else here particularly needing him, he said he wouldn't be in for the rest of the week, possibly not next. He left no address, so I supposed he had rejoined you."

Adèle felt a lump rise in her throat as she realized that George *might* have come to her—she remembered how she had missed him. Resolutely forcing a smile, she exchanged a few light sentences with Mr. Mooney, who insisted on seeing her safely into her taxi.

The ride uptown seemed endless, for she was tired and the reaction caused by her disappointment depressed her. However, when she finally reached her own door her excitement returned and she sprang eagerly up the steps.

"Is Mr. Wade in?" she demanded, as soon as the door opened.

"Yes, Madame," answered the butler. "Mr. Wade is dressing to dine out. Will Madame dine at home?"

"I don't know until I have talked with Mr. Wade. He doesn't expect me. I'll give the orders as soon as I've seen him."

Adèle called the words over her

shoulder. She could not wait for the lift, and was already half-way up the stairs. George heard her voice and met her at the door of his dressing-room, clasping her in his arms and kissing her again and again. His valet had discreetly disappeared.

"You darling!" cried George, holding her off and gazing at her warmly. "Jove, but it's good to see you. Are you down to stay?"

"Indeed I am," answered Adèle, happily. "I couldn't stand it without you, George. You'll never know how lonely I was. Oh, it's just lovely to be at home!" Suddenly she looked troubled. "Thomas said you were dining out."

Wade's delight turned to consternation.

"The devil!" he exclaimed. "I'd forgotten that. It's a—a—business engagement. I'm to dine at the club. I suppose I could get out of it." He spoke doubtfully.

Adèle formed a sudden resolution.

"No," she said, assuming a cheerfulness she was far from feeling. "You keep your engagement. I'm tired anyway, so I'll just have a tray brought up to my room, and go to bed early. The rest will do me good."

"All right," agreed George, evidently much relieved. "That settles things nicely. I don't like to leave you, dearest, but this is important. It may mean a lot to me in a business way. Never mind. You get a good rest tonight, and tomorrow night we'll make up for it. Hello, what's that?"

Adèle had thrown aside her wraps and had drawn from her bag a small parcel.

"It's your present, Sweetheart," she explained. "Have you forgotten that tomorrow is your birthday? That's one of the reasons I was so anxious to get back."

"I had forgotten," acknowledged George. "Say, Adèle, this is a beauty." He gazed admiringly at the ring in his hand, of dull gold and platinum, a queer design, with something Oriental and outlandish about it.

"It is good-looking," agreed Adèle,

much pleased at his appreciation. "Ed Russell designed it and I was so delighted that I made him destroy the design. I wanted you to have something that no one else in the world could copy."

"Am I to put it on now?"

"Yes. Then when you are at your old club you won't forget you have a wife."

Wade, who had finished dressing, crossed over and lifted her in his arms.

"That's one thing I never forget, little girl," he said tenderly. "I don't know what I'd do without you, you witch. No other fellow ever had such a perfect wife." He held her close for a long moment.

He released her and stepped back as Thomas entered with a card.

"It's Phil Stone," announced Adèle. "I wonder what he wants at this hour. Of course he'll stay for dinner. I'd better give orders."

Phillip Stone was Adèle's favorite cousin. He and his wife lived the year round at the extreme eastern point of Long Island, motoring into Manhattan from time to time as the mood seized them.

"Go down and see him first," suggested George. "I'll speak to him and then run along. I'm a bit late as it is."

Phillip Stone greeted the Wades affectionately.

"I knew you were in town," he explained in his heavy, jovial voice, "for we saw George as we came in yesterday. Isabel is down at the hotel dolling up. She sent me to see if you can't dine with us and go to the theater afterwards. We go back tomorrow, so we're making every moment tell."

"Sorry," said George, before Adèle could speak. "I have a business engagement. And Adèle's going to bed early. Too bad, Phil. We'd have enjoyed it."

"I should say it is too bad," declared Phil, crestfallen. "We had counted on it ever since we saw you, George. Stunning girl you had with you. Who was she?"

Wade had stiffened, but his voice

showed no trace of emotion as he answered:

"Mistaken identity, Phil," he said, quietly. "I was not with any girl yesterday."

"Do you mean to tell me"—Stone's tone expressed incredulity—"that Isabel and I didn't pass you in a machine just this side of Jamaica?"

"You did not. I never left the office all day yesterday."

Adèle, remembering that Mr. Mooney had told her George had not been at his office for three days, opened her mouth to speak, but decided that George knew what he was doing. If he wished to deceive Phil, doubtless it was for a good reason.

"Fine fellow, George," declared Stone, when Wade had gone. "I don't know anybody I like better. I'd have sworn it was he that we passed yesterday, but then, we were speeding it up a bit, so we only caught a glimpse. I say, though, Adèle, Isabel's going to be mighty disappointed over your failing us tonight. We wanted you."

"I'm sorry," said Adèle, regretfully. "I'd love to go."

"Why don't you, then?" pleaded Stone. He crossed to her side and took her tiny, ringed hands in one of his. "Be a sport, Adèle. You can sleep some other time. Come on!"

"I will," agreed Adèle, after a moment. "If I stay here I'll simply get the blues wishing for George, and, besides, I want to see Isabel."

"Hurry up and get ready," ordered Stone. "I'll wait for you. The car's outside."

II

Adèle, relieved at the thought of missing a lonely evening, ran quickly out to the lift, humming a little song. Louise was in the dressing-room, busily engaged in unpacking.

"Quick, Louise," exclaimed Adèle impatiently. "Get me into something—anything—I don't care what—just so we lose no time."

The girl, who was genuinely attached to her little mistress, entered into

the spirit of the thing and in a remarkably short time Adèle rejoined Stone.

"Good!" he declared, gazing at her approvingly. "Isabel couldn't have been quicker." From Phillip, who was devoted to his wife, this was high praise.

In spite of their haste, however, they found Isabel waiting and impatient. The two women exchanged affectionate greetings.

"Adèle," said Isabel, stepping back and examining her critically, "how do you do it? You don't look a day over twenty-five—does she, Phil?"

"Not a day," agreed Stone, emphatically. His entire life was spent in backing up his wife's opinions, but this time he was not far wrong. In her simple white gown, worn with few jewels, Adèle seemed very girlish.

"It's happiness," laughed Adèle, much pleased at their honest praise. "That, and freedom from care. Poor George does the worrying for us both."

"Humph!" snorted Stone. "It's mighty few men have as little to worry them as George has. You were both of you born under a lucky star. I don't believe either of you ever had a wish that wasn't granted before you could express it."

A shadow passed over Adèle's face.

"That's putting it a little strong, Phil," she said quietly.

Isabel glanced at her with ready sympathy. Childlessness had been the one sorrow in both their lives.

"I took it for granted you were coming," Isabel explained, changing the subject, "and got seats for 'The Prize.' They are at one side and too far forward for choice, but I was lucky to get anything. The house is packed every night. It's the only hit so far this season."

"What will we do about the extra seat?" asked Adèle, thinking how much happier she would have been could George have been with them.

"Turn it in," returned Isabel, carelessly. She was a large woman who divided her time between her dogs—her kennels were famous—and her prize

chickens. "They'll be able to sell it half a dozen times over. Come on. We're going to dine at Sherry's."

Adèle, always at her best in the presence of these happy-go-lucky cousins, soon found herself in the highest of spirits. She told at length of her summer experiences, repeating anecdotes and gossip, and listening with equal interest when they regaled her with stories of "The Farm," as they called their magnificent home.

Phillip explained to Isabel that they had been mistaken about seeing Wade as they came in. She was not surprised, confessing frankly that she had been so struck by the remarkable beauty of the girl that she had given but little heed to the man.

The first act was nearly finished when they at last reached the theater, but their seats were on the aisle, so they slipped in without making a disturbance.

Adèle, who was always keenly interested in the theater, spent the first intermission in studying her program and in trying to piece together the plot from what little they had heard, the Stones watching her with affectionately amused eyes. Isabel was only a few years Adèle's senior, yet she habitually treated her as if they belonged to different generations. In this, as in everything else, Phillip followed his wife's lead.

When the second intermission came they were all ready to turn their attention to the people about them. It was not a fashionable audience and they were not surprised that they recognized no friends.

Suddenly Phillip started and leaned forward eagerly, twisting his neck in an effort to get a better view of the left stage-box, which was just forward from and above their seats.

"It is!" he exclaimed, excitedly to his wife. "That's the girl we thought we saw with George yesterday. Of course she's dressed differently, but I'm sure it's the same."

Both Isabel and Adèle were at once alert. By leaning back and sidewise

they could observe the girl at whom he was gazing. She was certainly worth a second look. Adèle thought she had never before seen anyone so beautiful. Not more than seventeen or eighteen years old, she had all the freshness of youth, but combined with it was an assurance of manner rather remarkable in one so young. Her eyes, sparkling with animation, were of a tawney brown, her skin a clear olive in which the color came and went with every excited breath; her hair, dressed without any attempt at effect, seemed ash gray except where the lights caught and turned it to pure gold. She appeared utterly unconscious that many opera glasses were leveled at her.

"That's the girl," whispered Isabel. "Didn't I tell you she was a beauty?"

"I wonder if the man looks like George," speculated Phillip. "I have half a mind to walk round where I can see him."

At his words Adèle dragged her eyes from the girl. She saw that there were two other occupants of the box, a plainly dressed woman of perhaps thirty and a man who sat so far back that he could not be seen. Before Phillip could carry out his intention, if it really had been one, the curtain ascended on the last act.

In spite of herself, Adèle could not keep her attention on the stage. Her eyes kept wandering to the girl in the box who, utterly lost to her surroundings, was vibrating to each emotion evoked by the drama before her. Suddenly the man put out his hand and, as though accidentally, let it glide along her arm. It was an intimate little gesture of affection and it thrilled Adèle, for it was one of George's, one of his dear ways of telling her that she was in his thoughts. Poor George, cooped up at the club with a lot of men when he would so much rather be with her! A very tender smile rippled over Adèle's face. She wondered what George was doing, and if he would be at home when she arrived. She had guessed, from that one little movement, that the man in the box loved the girl, and she was

equally certain that the girl did not know it. She wondered if he were young or old, grave or gay. It would take a light-hearted temperament combined with an unusual character to hold that vivid creature. Adèle, was somewhat astonished by her own interest in these passing strangers.

Suddenly the man, secure from observation in the semi-darkness, allowed one hand to fall carelessly upon the velvet-covered rail. A gleam of light from the box behind fell directly upon the ring he wore—a ring of dull gold and platinum, a queer design, with something oriental and outlandish about it. Adèle's heart gave one frantic throb and then turned cold within her. There could be no mistake. It was *her* ring, and George was the man in the box—George, who had talked of a business appointment at the club! The thought that George had lied to her filled her and overwhelmed her. She felt a sensation of almost physical sickness. George had lied to her! So this was the husband whose devotion was the whole substance and meaning of her life, and the wonder of their little world! This was the end, sudden, cruel, cataclysmic!

Adèle, breathless and clammy, shrank into her chair. The blood pounded at her temples; the lights on the stage danced before her eyes; the voices of the actors came to her as from a great distance, conveying no meaning to her shocked senses. She felt that she must scream, but with hands gripped until the nails cut deep into the flesh, she controlled herself, realizing dimly that now more than ever before in her life she must keep her head.

With miserable eyes she studied her rival—her *rival*! She knew only too well that, daintily attractive as she was, she had never for one single moment approached the radiant beauty of this girl. She could well understand George's being attracted—but that did not justify his lie to her, his lie to Phillip—for of course it had been he that Phillip and Isabel had seen out on Long Island. The thought acted like

a spur. Adèle straightened. She must get the Stones away; there must be no chance meeting with George and the girl in the lobby. The play was drawing to a close; she must act quickly if at all. She leaned close to Isabel.

"I'm not feeling well," she whispered. "I want to get out without making any fuss. Please move so that I can get by."

Isabel turned a concerned face.

"Why, Adèle," she exclaimed, shocked. "You are ghastly. Wait. Phil will get a glass of water."

"No," insisted Adèle. "I want air. Let me by."

Isabel started to protest but Adèle had no time to waste in words. Somehow she crowded by and flew up the aisle. Perforce the Stones followed.

"Get me a taxi, Phil," ordered Adèle, cutting short their inquiries.

"Nothing of the sort," returned Isabel, briskly. "Of course we'll take you up in the car."

Adèle saw that it was useless to argue. She could hear the first faint flutter of departure inside.

"Anything, Phil," she agreed; "just so you hurry. Hurry! Hurry!"

Phillip, not understanding but obedient, rushed to get their wraps. Adèle, scarcely waiting for him to slip her cloak over her shoulders, hastened out upon the sidewalk and into the waiting machine. The Stones followed more leisurely and the car moved off just as the first comers from the auditorium appeared in the lobby. Adèle leaned back among the cushions with closed eyes. Isabel and Phillip exchanged disturbed glances. This sudden and complete collapse astounded them. At length Adèle straightened up. A little color returned to her white cheeks.

"I'm sorry," she said contritely; "to have spoiled your evening. It was stupid of me, but—"

"Don't worry about that," interrupted Isabel, taking the little clenched fist in her capable palm. "It is we who were brutal, dragging you out when you were tired from your trip. You seemed all right at dinner, though."

The car drew up in front of the Wade home. Phillip jumped out and Adèle followed, turning to bar the way as Isabel arose.

"I'm not going to ask you in, if you don't mind. I want to get to sleep."

"Nonsense," returned Isabel, vigorously. "We'll at least stay until George comes. He wouldn't forgive us if we desert you when you are feeling like this. You run on to bed, and we'll wait down stairs."

Adèle shook her head emphatically.

"It isn't necessary," she declared. "Louise knows exactly what to do for me, and besides, I don't want George to hear that I am not well. He worries so when I'm the least bit ill. Please, Isabel, let me have my own way."

"It's *her* show, Isabel," said Phillip, seeing that Adèle was in earnest. "You can't nurse her if she won't have it. She's all right now, anyway. See, she's got a fine color."

Isabel liked the brilliant red spots in Adèle's cheeks as little as the former pallor, but she wisely forebore to argue.

"Very well," she agreed reluctantly; "but if Adèle comes down with a sick spell—"

Once inside the house, Adèle paused at the door of the lift to gather her strength to face Louise. She would have given worlds to be alone, to dismiss her maid, and, prone across her bed, to weep out her heart-ache. Pride forbade. She pushed the button and, arriving at the second floor, entered. Louise came forward in quick concern. Adèle stopped the words before they were uttered.

"A slight headache," she explained. "Please get me undressed as quickly as possible."

The girl did her best, but to Adèle the moments were maddening.

"Never mind brushing my hair," she exclaimed, when the jewelled pins had been withdrawn. "I—I don't feel like it to-night. Simply braid it."

Louise drew back the scented sheets and Adèle slipped into bed.

"Shall I sleep on the couch in the dressing-room?" suggested Louise. "You may need me in the night."

"No," returned Adèle, closing her eyes. "I'll be all right. Don't wait to pick up those things. You can do it in the morning."

Louise raised the window and crossed to the door.

"Louise."

The girl paused.

"You need not mention my headache to Mr. Wade. It would trouble him."

"Very well, Madame. Good night."

The door closed and Adèle was left alone, to lie rigid, staring into the dark, until dawn. Years before, in her early girlhood, she had had occasion to spend many a night in this fashion, and the thought came to her fatuously that perhaps her present misery was a belated punishment for the sin she had committed then.

III

Having fallen asleep at daylight, Adèle did not awake until noon. She recovered consciousness heavily, wearily; then, rousing herself with an effort, she sat up, her chin cupped in her hand and her eyes gazing meditatively into space. In the long watches of the silent night she had thrashed the matter out in all its aspects and had formulated a plan which she must now elaborate.

George's loyalty, of which she had been so proud, so sure, had wavered. He had turned from her to another. Her chief humiliation lay in the girl's youth—that George had been captivated by immaturity. She had always known that he adored her own girlishness, that he loved her slender figure and lilting little laugh; but she had thought he had known that underneath her gay frivolity was a *woman's* mind, a *woman's* ability. She felt now that she had failed in her life work—she had not taught George to appreciate the new beauties of each advancing year. It was evidently youth that he admired,

youth only. Very well; youth he should have.

With muddled determination, grasping at silly straws, she decided to put herself into the hands of beauty specialists. She had heard much of such magicians; she remembered their signs along Fifth avenue; she knew what they had done for other women. She would win back her husband, whatever the cost to her dignity, her pride, her self-respect, *but*—and here was the recurring cruelty of it, the endless *da capo* of misery—never again could she feel certain of him, never again could she worship him as she had done during all these guileless years. A love that had once strayed was a love damaged beyond repair. She must have it, had as it was—she felt that she could not imagine life without it—but would it content her, would it ever seem worth while?

Adèle did not for a single moment blame the girl. That face was too frankly innocent, too wholly the face of golden youth, to justify such a thought. No, the fault was George's, and George's only. It was he who had brought down this vast and almost inconceivable disaster upon her. It was he, the one she trusted and honored most, who had made a barbarian's wreck of her whole life.

Louise came in with the breakfast tray. She arranged the bed table and, crossing to the windows, adjusted the shades.

"Mrs. Stone telephoned," she said. "I told her you were sleeping and she would not permit me to disturb you."

Adèle's eyes were fixed upon the envelope which, with a single rose, lay beside her plate.

"You may go, Louise," she said. She waited until the door was closed then drew forth the sheet of paper. This was his note:

My Sweetheart:

Just a line to say good morning. You don't know how good it seems to have you with me again. I glanced in a few moments ago but you seemed so tired I didn't waken you. Rest up

to-day, dear, and to-night we'll have a double celebration—your return and my birthday. I hated to leave you last night but you know it is business that makes pleasure possible.

GEORGE.

Adèle laid aside the note. Another lie. She wondered if she would ever again be able to believe anything he told her. Why had he seen fit to add to her burden by falsehoods? Couldn't he have known that she would inevitably learn the truth in time? Had he hoped to deceive her indefinitely?

Louise entered to announce Isabel Stone.

"Tell her to come in," ordered Adèle, "First draw up that chair. That's right. Thank you."

Isabel came in, studying Adèle critically.

"Quite an improvement," she announced judicially. "Though you don't look even now as if you had rested much."

"I didn't have a very good night," confessed Adèle. Then, to change the subject, she added: "I thought you were going home today."

"We did expect to, but I wanted to be sure you were fit to leave. The truth is, Adèle, you gave us both quite a turn last night. You don't realize how all-in you looked. Since you're all right, we'll probably go this afternoon."

"Where is Phillip?"

"Oh, I sent him out to buy some records for the Grafonola. That should keep him occupied until I'm ready. How's George this morning?—or haven't you seen him?"

"He came in while I was sleeping but didn't wake me."

Adèle simulated a happy excitement. She was surprised at her ability to conceal her feelings.

"I'm going to rest up to-day so as to be very fit when he comes home. We're to have a grand celebration to-night."

"Your return?"

"Yes—and his birthday. He's thirty-eight today."

"He doesn't look it," declared Isabel.

"When Phil and I are with you and George, we feel years older."

"I'm not sure," said Adèle, slowly; "that that is quite the compliment you intended."

"Why, Adèle, what do you mean?"

"Simply that I've been thinking—and I've about decided that each passing year ought to give a person so much added intelligence that when one is thirty-four, as I am, a woman should be proud to look every moment of her age and her friends ought to admire her more for that intelligence than they do for the lineless, milk-and-water beauty of eighteen. That's rather complicated, but you see what I mean."

"Rot!" declared Isabel vigorously. "I don't pretend to be a beauty, so I could say all that, but you, who'd pass for a girl in any crowd and who yet have a good sound head on your shoulders—you know that it isn't true. Hang on to your looks, Adèle, and you'll hold George when the rest of us have lost our husbands. Men love to guard you Dresden china playthings."

"If it is simply looks that men care for, they can always find a new face more pretty than the one they're used to."

Adèle feared she was saying too much, but she couldn't withhold the words.

"Well, that's one thing *you* don't have to fear," returned Isabel. "What's the matter, Adèle dear? You are more nearly blue than I've ever known you."

"I suppose it was my bad night. I don't feel up to the march. However, I'll be all right as soon as George comes. Remember we've been separated for a whole week." Adèle laughed.

"I know," agreed Isabel sympathetically. "I wouldn't have Phil realize it for worlds, but I can't bear to have him out of my sight. Which reminds me that I'd better run by for him or he'll have bought out the shop. He's capable of it."

"Won't you stay for luncheon?"

"Mercy, no!" rising and kissing

Adèle. "If you need me, telephone out to the house and I'll come right in."

As soon as Isabel had gone Adèle summoned Louise, and, dressing quickly, ordered the car. Despite her new and somewhat muddled conclusions regarding the duties and privileges of thirty-four, she felt a desperate eagerness to cling to her youth. She had heard vaguely of amazing repairs, almost miraculous reconstructions. She didn't know just what was done, but she knew that it was marvelous. Twenty minutes later she was in the dim, scented parlor of a Fifth Avenue beauty specialist, an eminent and enormously prosperous quack. Many of her friends, she knew, went there, but secure in her dainty prettiness she had never thought of following them until this bitter day. She wondered uneasily if she would meet any of them. But it was early and she recognized no one. For two, three, four hours she submitted to complex and mystical rites. She was massaged, kneaded, pinched. Her hair was washed with strange, sweet-smelling decoctions. Her eyes were given painstaking consideration. She was gabbled over in dubious French. She was stripped to the waist.

That evening, dressed and waiting, she stood before a pier glass observing her reflection. It had been worth the effort, she acknowledged it. Her hair fell in soft, radiant masses over her forehead, and underneath it, half hidden, her violet eyes sparkled with a new glow. Never had her delicate skin seemed so transparent, or her teeth so white between her thin red lips.

George, coming in from the hall, paused in delight to absorb the picture.

"You wonderful darling," he breathed, then took her in his arms and crushed her to him as though he would never let her go. "You don't know how I've missed you! It has seemed a thousand years."

Adèle trembled at his touch but it was not with the old elation. She thrilled under his kisses, but her thoughts were not of him but of delight in his subjugation. Surely, surely she

could win him back! Her power was not all gone. . . .

An experienced courtésan might have learned a lot from Adèle that evening. She wooed George with craft and passion. With drooping eyes and moist, half-parted lips she lured him on almost mockingly, frankly delighted by every response. The shamelessness of the true wife, the utterly respectable woman, was in her. George, at first somewhat amazed, quickly rose to her playing. Always a devoted lover, he ended by yielding completely to her spell. Their lips met in long kisses. The ache was in her heart, but more than once Adèle almost forgot it. She snuggled close to her man—the man she had lost and was winning back. Her soft arms were around his neck. He kissed her eyes, her ears, her chin, her neck, her hair, her shoulders, her lips. The hours faded into a sort of glorious dream. . . .

IV

Life fell back into the old grooves. George was more devoted than ever; he resented every moment that he and Adèle were apart. Adèle could not forget so easily. She rested more than she had been wont to do, and much of her time was spent in the beauty parlor. This was a profound secret. Even Louise did not suspect. In order to find the time for this new occupation, Adèle was compelled gradually to drop out of the little social diversions which had heretofore filled her days. Her evenings were invariably given to George.

Of course, she often thought of the girl in the box, wondered who she was, and what had become of her. Did George still see her in the daytime? She doubted it. He could not be entirely false. The devotion which he lavished upon her was not simulated. She *knew* it was real.

Sometimes the old wound reopened with biting intensity. Once George put out his hand and, as though accidentally, let it glide along Adèle's arm

in the intimate little gesture which had for her been profaned. She shuddered involuntarily and shrank away; then, seeing in his eyes the question which the crowd about them prevented his putting into words, she resumed her rôle, smiling back at him reassuringly. Incidents such as this were rare and gradually her peace of mind returned. She did not relinquish her vigilance, but as the weeks slipped by the thought of her rival grew more and more faint. Then, in one crushing moment, she lost all the security that she had gained.

As she was alighting from her car in front of her own door one afternoon late in November she was accosted by a beggar. It was bitterly cold and, seeing that he was thinly clad, she decided to give him one of George's all too many suits. To the disgust of Thomas, the butler, she bade the man wait in the reception hall and herself hastened to her husband's dressing-room. The valet was absent, but Adèle, making a quick selection, took down a gray business suit and threw it across her arm. As she turned away she felt something in one of the pockets. Pausing, she drew it out, a tissue paper covered package, attractively tied with blue ribbons. With trembling fingers she opened it and shook out the contents, an embroidered scarf. On the top lay a thick letter addressed in fashionable angular chirography to "Mr. Robert Tucker." It was unsealed and Adèle read it through without hesitation:

My Dear Bob:—It seems so odd not to call you uncle, but in that as in all things I shall try to please you. I only wish that something really *big* could come up so that I might show you how truly grateful I am to you for all your kindness to me. I used to think you the very *best* man in the world—and I've not changed my mind.

This little muffler I started for you last winter and I've been working on it hard all this week, before you came each morning and after you left at night. Since we are to leave so much sooner than we expected I am glad that I hurried with it, for I am determined to slip it in your pocket at the station so that you may find it after we are gone.

I'm afraid that I showed my disappointment when you told us last night that we'd

have to go back to-day. It has been a *wonderful* visit and both Miss Ellis and I have enjoyed every second of it. It was *dear* of you to put aside your business for us, and I know you have neglected all sorts of important things.

Of course, school will seem frightfully insipid after this, but I'll try to study *hard* and make you *proud* of me—if only to earn another holiday with you. Do try to come down for the dance the twenty-seventh. Madame Cleverige says that I mustn't tease you—and I won't—only the girls have never seen you in evening dress and I'm so *proud* of you.

I must dress now, or I won't be ready when you come—and I don't want to miss a single moment of our last day.

Your devoted,

MARGARET.

All Adèle's old jealousies returned fourfold. Carefully she returned the letter to the envelope and retied the package as she had found it. She thrust it back into the pocket and restored the suit to its accustomed place. She passed out into the hall and on to her own room.

An hour later Louise, entering, found her sitting quietly before the fire, her face shaded by a screen.

"That man is still waiting, Madame. Shall Thomas tell him to go?"

"Oh, I'm afraid I'd forgotten him," said Adèle, without turning her head. "See if there's any money in my bag, Louise."

"Only a twenty-dollar bill, Madame."

"Very well; give him that."

"But, Madame," protested Louise; "it's too much. He could never get it changed. People would think he had stolen it."

"It doesn't matter," said Adèle, impatiently.

She arose, and, crossing the pale blue velvet carpet, began aimlessly moving about the dainty trifles which littered her dressing-table. After a moment she turned to the maid again.

"Of course I don't mean that. Tell Thomas to send someone with him. Buy him a suit and give him whatever change there is. Poor man, he probably needs it. Then come back, Louise, and get me ready for Mrs. de Pellon's *Thé Dansant*. I've decided to go."

She felt that action of any sort was better than to be left alone with her thoughts. For several days she rushed feverishly from place to place, coming home each night so utterly exhausted that she fell asleep as soon as her head touched the pillow. The pace told on her looks, despite the ministrations of the beauty specialist. Fine lines began to appear at the corners of her mouth, and, for the first time in her life, she was driven to the eager use of the rouge pot. She realized that to keep this up would be fatal. In the end she stopped as quickly as she had begun.

Every word of the letter she had read was seared in her consciousness. It brought George's treachery before her as nothing else could have done. No longer was she able to persuade herself that his interest in the girl had been a mere passing fancy, induced by his absence from his wife—his real love. She recognized now that George, as "Bob," had known this mysterious Margaret for months, perhaps even years. They were on intimate terms; she had called him uncle, a title which he now wished to repudiate, undoubtedly that he might lessen the years between them. All this meant that his duplicity in dealing with Adèle had begun far back in the past. And why—*why*? The query surged endlessly through her brain.

At length, unable any longer to bear the suspense, a wild plan which had gradually been shaping itself in the back of her brain completely obsessed her. She would go to Philadelphia—Madame Cleverige's school there was of nation-wide fame—and by hook or crook manage in some way to see this Margaret. Once there, she must trust to her wits for each forward step. The trip would take only a few hours; George need never know that she had been away from the city. And since in his dealings with the girl he had assumed a false name, she would follow his example.

The more Adèle thought of this plan, the more determined she became to try it. One by one she overcame the objections and difficulties which presented

themselves, until at length she was certain that, if luck would only favor her just the least bit, she could carry it through without detection.

Accordingly one day in early December she presented herself, as Mrs. Ralph Wilson, of Los Angeles, to Madame Cleverige. She explained at length that her niece, Nan Wilson, seventeen years old, had, because of a delicate constitution, been educated at home, but that it had been decided to send her to some good Eastern school for the next term. That term would not begin for months, but Mrs. Wilson had come to solicit information regarding Cleverige Hall. She gave, as reference, the name of her friend, Mrs. George Wade, of New York.

Madame Cleverige was delighted with her caller. Adèle exerted all her charm and the result justified her effort. Madame was completely captivated.

"Nan is enthusiastic over the idea of coming to Cleverige Hall," smiled Adèle, feeling her way. "I hope you can find room for her. She has heard glowing reports of the life here from some friend of hers who has been here—Margaret, I think the name was—though I can't be sure."

"Undoubtedly Margaret Collins, of San Francisco," returned Madame. "She was here last year, a charming girl."

They discussed the subject at some length. Adèle saw that she was on the wrong lead.

"Could I meet some of the older girls," she asked presently; "some of those who are likely to be in Nan's classes. I would like to ask them to be kind to her if she comes."

Madame Cleverige beamed graciously.

"Of course," she explained with dignity; "we have a long waiting list, but I think we can make room for your niece, Mrs. Wilson—in fact, I am sure that you may count upon it."

"How kind of you," gushed Adèle, with charming gratitude. She was beginning to take a real interest in the

imaginary Nan. "My niece will be so happy to hear it."

"I shall send for a couple of my young ladies," suggested Madame. "Let me see, Genevieve Baker is eighteen, a delightful companion. I am sure Miss Wilson will like her."

"I am certain she will since you say so, Madame," said Adèle sweetly.

"I'll send for Margaret Rice also. She is seventeen, but mature for her age. She is my most popular pupil, and you can do no better than to enlist her sympathy. I am very fond of her, Mrs. Wilson, which is only natural, as she has been with me all twelve months for nearly six years."

"Oh, an orphan?" Adèle hoped that her interest was not too apparent.

"Yes." Perhaps you have met her guardian, Mr. Robert Tucker, of New York."

Adèle shook her head.

"A charming man," announced Madame, unctuously; "and, like the rest of us, devoted to Margaret. In fact," Madame lowered her voice, lured to a bit of gossip by the engaging personality of her guest, "I should not be at all surprised if they some day entered into a closer relationship than that of guardian and ward. There's quite a disparity in age, but, you know, that is frequently not considered an objection." She already regretted her indiscretion and hastily changed the subject. "I'll send for Genevieve and Margaret."

When the two girls entered the room Genevieve Baker acknowledged the introduction with gentle courtesy, and Margaret would have followed her example had not Adèle, moved by an impulse she was never able to understand, taken the girl in her arms and kissed her.

There was an awkward pause, broken by Madame Cleverige's smooth tones.

"Mrs. Wilson's niece will be with us next term, young ladies. She is not strong, and Mrs. Wilson wishes you to help make her feel at home."

There followed an avalanche of questions regarding the age, tastes, and appearance of the supposititious Nan that

taxed Adèle's inventive powers. However she managed to get through it without tripping, and when she arose to take her departure it was with a feeling of complete satisfaction.

"I expect to be in Philadelphia again Saturday," she said. "Couldn't you young ladies, and you also, Madame, go to the *matinée* with me and then have tea at Hart's?"

The girls looked up eagerly; they were completely fascinated by Mrs. Wilson.

"I'm afraid I can't manage it this week," declared Madame regretfully. "Still, there is no reason why Margaret and Genevieve shouldn't accept. Perhaps you can include Miss Ellis, one of my teachers, in the party. She is fond of Margaret and often accompanies her about. This would relieve you of either coming for the girls or bringing them home."

"By all means," assented Adèle. After arranging necessary details, she made her adieux.

She soon found that she had overestimated her strength. Long before she reached New York she was suffering from a violent headache which cast her, wan and blinded, upon her bed. That evening, for the first time in weeks, she was unable to join George. He, terrified at her condition, would fain have asked the why and wherefore, but Adèle was too far gone to answer his questions, so he could only hover about distractedly.

V

Despite this breakdown, Adèle held to her intention of going to Philadelphia on Saturday and that afternoon saw the first of many such journeys. Sometimes Miss Ellis, Genevieve or one of the other girls accompanied her; more frequently it was only Margaret.

Adèle had formed no definite purpose; she was simply drifting, but of one thing she was uneasily sure—she had come to like the girl, who returned the feeling with an open adoration second only to that which she lavished

upon her guardian, of whom she often spoke.

"It's no wonder I think so much of him," she explained one afternoon, as they were motoring in from the school. "He's been simply an angel to me ever since I've known him."

"Haven't you always known him?" asked Adele, in a voice which she held steady by a great effort. Was she to learn something at last?—and how would it affect her feelings toward George?

"Always?" repeated Margaret, with raised brows. "Mercy, no! Up to the time I was twelve I lived on a ranch in Montana, fifty miles from the railroad, and people from outside never came to see us. It was a queer life, I suppose, for I knew no children—no one, in fact, except the men about the place, which was in charge of a man and his wife. I called them Mama and Papa, and, of course, took it for granted that they were my parents. Neither of them was particularly fond of me—I got on far better with the ranch hands. Still, I missed Mama when she died—she was at least kind to me in her own way. Then Uncle Bob appeared and everything changed at once."

"Why did he come?" demanded Adèle. She asked the question to prolong the story. Margaret had become interested in replacing a straying lock and seemed inclined to stop talking. "I mean, was it accidental?"

"No, indeed," returned Margaret. She pulled out a tiny gold vanity box and began examining—in sections—her head in the minute mirror. "He'd been sent for. Oh, I forgot to tell you. He was my mother's favorite cousin—my own mother, who died when I was born. Father was dead even before that, so I had simply been left in charge of mother's old nurse. It all seemed like a fairy story, as Bob told it. He broke it to me by degrees, so that it wouldn't be too much of a shock. He had intended at first to leave me on the ranch, but when he saw how uncongenial Papa and I were he made up his mind to bring me East to school. I think,"

Margaret smiled happily, "that Uncle Bob liked me better than he had expected, and wanted me with him."

The story was wringing Adèle's heart. She knew that George had never had any cousin. Who was Margaret, and what had been George's interest in her that had taken him clear out to Montana? She remembered with a pang that he had made several Western trips years before *on business*. Was this the business—and why, *why*?

"So he brought you East with him?" she suggested, through stiff lips.

"Not at once," returned Margaret. "He had to find the right school first. I begged hard to go to New York, for I wanted to be as near him as possible, but he decided that Cleverige Hall was the best place, so I've been there ever since."

"Do you see G—your guardian often?"

Margaret's face clouded.

"Until this year he's come down every week regularly. Now, however, he's dreadfully busy and it's been just ages since I saw him."

"Do you often visit him in New York?"

Adèle was prolonging her own agony, but she could not help it. She leaned back among the cushions, shading her face with her hand.

The question threw Margaret into a state of rapture. Eagerly she told of her only visit to the city—dwelling upon how unexpectedly she and Miss Ellis had been sent for, how devoted Bob had been, spending every moment in their society and thinking only of them and of their pleasure. Enthusiastically she described every detail, never noticing that Mrs. Wilson was for once unresponsive.

She was still talking when they reached the theater, where another ordeal awaited Adèle. As they followed the usher to their seats she glanced idly across the house and saw Howard Stone, Phillip's younger brother. He was reading the program, and Adèle silently prayed that it would hold his interest until the curtain went up. Vain

hope! Almost immediately he laid it aside and began scanning the faces about him. Adèle, watching secretly, saw his eyes rest for a moment on Margaret's face, pass on, and then return with a look of frank admiration. A moment later he caught sight of his cousin and, flashing her a smile of delighted recognition, sprang to his feet, only to sink back, much astonished at the firm negation of her frown.

For Adèle the afternoon was spoiled. She had always feared that she might run across someone who knew her, but had hoped that a frigid demeanor would prevent undue cordiality in such a case. The fact that her acquaintance in Philadelphia was limited and slight had, until now, stood her in good stead.

But Howard Stone of all people! It was almost as bad as meeting George. What was he doing out of New York?—and how should she act? Knowing his youthful bumptiousness, she was well aware that he would not long accept her repulse, particularly since there was a girl as attractive as Margaret to be considered. Anxiously but covertly she observed the cloud on his clean-cut, smooth-shaven face.

She could not have talked had her life depended on it, but fortunately with Margaret there was no need. The girl always lived in a play. No acting was too bad, no star too fat and ugly, to spoil her delight; no surroundings distracting enough to take her attention from the stage. This afternoon proved no exception. For two long hours she sat breathless, palpitating, completely unaware of her friend's absorption.

Not for a moment did Adèle forget Howard, and she was not surprised, just before the falling of the final curtain, to see him leave his seat and hasten to the lobby. Evidently he intended to intercept them on their way out. She did not hesitate. Slipping her hand through Margaret's arm, she made her way to a side entrance, breathing a sigh of satisfaction when they finally turned the corner.

Her relief was short-lived, for scarcely were they seated at Hart's when

Howard entered and, with a defiant glance at Adèle, sought a nearby table.

She understood his look. He was outraged at her unusual conduct and he meant to meet Margaret whether she liked it or not. She knew that she was beaten, so, making the best of the situation, she wrote a cramped note on a card and handed it to the waiter. Margaret was poring over a tray of French pastry, but Adèle eagerly studied Howard's face as he read her message. She was seriously troubled, yet she noted his utter astonishment with a feeling akin to amusement. This is what she wrote:

Howard:—I am Mrs. Wilson, of Los Angeles, spending the winter in New York. My niece, Nan Wilson, of Los Angeles, is seventeen and not strong. Mrs. George Wade is my friend, but I seldom mention her. You are merely a friend. If you will promise never to ask any questions, you may come and meet Miss Rice.

Howard palpably hesitated. He was opposed to anything which smacked of the underhanded. Then he arose and resolutely crossed the room.

Meantime Adèle had hurriedly spoken to Margaret.

"I'm going to introduce Howard Stone, a young lawyer of New York, and one of the finest fellows in the world. I admire him greatly. He is one of the few young men who don't allow their money to spoil them. He takes his profession seriously and they tell me he has a brilliant future."

Margaret noted with approval the firmly knit figure and the pleasant voice which acknowledged the introduction. Howard accepted the chair which the waiter drew out.

"What are you doing over here?" questioned Adèle. "I never expected to see you, you busy man, at a *matinée*."

"It is rather out of my line," Howard smiled. Having accomplished his desire, he was at peace with the world. "Truth is, the man I was to meet put me off until six o'clock, so I had time on my hands. Fortunate, wasn't it?" Then he added, wickedly: "How is Nan?"

"Oh," exclaimed Margaret eagerly. "Do you know Nan? How splendid!"

Adèle interfered with a quick frown at Howard.

"No, he has never met her, but, like you, he has heard me talk much about her. Come, Margaret. I'm afraid we'll have to go."

Stone showed his dismay.

"Oh, I say," he protested, but the others were adjusting their wraps. "May I take you home?"

"Madame Cleverige would object," said Adèle, firmly. "We'll say good-bye here."

"Then where shall I meet you afterwards?"

Adèle smiled sweetly.

"No place, I fear, dear boy. I'm going directly back to New York."

"All right. I'll wait for you at the station and ride over with you."

"But your man?" faltered his cousin. "I'll be through with him in time," grimly. "I must have a talk with you."

"Very well. But I fear it will disappoint you."

She hoped that he might miss connections, but, true to his word, he was awaiting her when she reached the station. Silently they sought the parlor car and he set about making her comfortable.

"Now, Adèle," he said, leaning toward her and lightly tapping his lips with his forefinger—a habit of his when he wished to concentrate his thoughts. "What does it all mean?"

"You forget," she reminded him, "that you promised to ask no questions. That was the condition I made."

"You surely don't expect to hold me to that?" he demanded, incredulously.

"I'm sorry, Howard, but I do. I—I wish it wasn't necessary, dear, but it is, and it always will be. I give you my word that I am acting for the best and —" She swallowed the lump that would rise in her throat. It had been a hard afternoon for her.

"Something's wrong, Adèle," Howard said, gravely. "Tell me all about it and perhaps I can help you. Remember, I'm a lawyer."

"You *can* help me, more than you will ever guess, by forgetting this afternoon completely, and never, under any circumstances, mentioning it to anyone."

The young man saw that, whatever her reason, it was a powerful one. He hesitated, flushing.

"Sorry, Adèle, but I can't obey you. You'll think me an awful idiot, but—but I've got to see Miss Rice again." He did not raise his eyes from her tiny gray suede boot. "I'd rather not have told you, but there seems to be no other way. You said they wouldn't let me call at her school, so it'll have to be through you. I—she—I—well, I'm going to see her some place, that's sure." His firm jaw set resolutely.

Adèle could scarcely conceal her astonishment. That Howard, who had never been particularly interested by any girl, was seriously smitten she could easily see, and it complicated matters more than she dared admit. She knew his stubbornness of old. If he had decided that he must see Margaret again he would surely compass it. She turned to the window and gazed out into the darkness.

"I'll help you," she said, after a long silence; "but it must be on my own terms."

"I say, that's not fair. I might—that is—oh, hang it all, Adèle, you're making it hard for me. This isn't a passing fancy with me. I'm not that kind, and this thing might—might come to a question of—marrying—"

"What? Already? Howard, you're crazy!"

"Naturally it sounds foolish to you. But I know what I'm talking about. She's wonderful! She's different! She's—oh, you know her."

Adèle leaned back wearily.

"Margaret may not succumb to your charms as easily as you have to hers," she suggested.

"That's true enough," and his face fell. "Still, I want my chance, and I want it fair."

"Under the circumstances," said Adèle, grudgingly. "I presume I'll

have to tell you at least part of the story. If it seems incomplete—well, it's the best I can do."

Rapidly but fully she sketched her relations with Margaret, as well as the girl's own story. She made no mention of George, hoping that Howard might never discover the connection between Wade and Mr. Robert Tucker. She ended by saying: "Margaret and I are to attend a musicale next Thursday. You may take us if you wish."

"Thank you. I'll be delighted, of course." His brow was still troubled. "But, Adèle—"

"No buts about it, Howard. Remember your promise. Things go *my* way, or not at all."

With this he had to be satisfied.

VI

During the following weeks Adèle made more and more frequent trips to Philadelphia, accompanied on nearly every occasion by Howard. Having once decided to abide by his cousin's restrictions, the young man fulfilled his part manfully, asking no inconvenient questions and changing the subject when Margaret inadvertently did so. That he resented his false position Adèle well knew, but she soon learned to trust to his discretion and to take a keen enjoyment in his presence and in Margaret's undisguised friendship for him.

In this Adèle was not unselfish. Her whole thought was to intrude as many interests as possible between the girl and George, a task which was rendered the easier owing to Margaret's pliant temperament.

"Bob" still wrote regularly to his ward, but he had not yet come to Philadelphia, a fact which comforted Adèle vastly. Studying Margaret as she did, she realized that the girl was developing and expanding wonderfully with each passing day, and she felt that, should George now come within the scope of her fascinations, her own task of holding him would be made immeasurably more difficult.

Her life in New York went on as usual—the days spent in enhancing her attractions, the evenings devoted to George's entertainment. Here she succeeded even better than she had dared to hope. Her husband was more attentive, more loverlike than in the first days of their married life, showering her with gifts and, far more to her liking, hovering about as though he could not bear to have her out of his sight. Had she been unaware of the existence of Margaret, her happiness would have been without a flaw. She had managed to keep him from meeting Howard, the more readily as their offices were in different parts of the city and the younger man's visits to the house had always been few and far between.

Despite the fact that Howard was with Adèle and Margaret so constantly, he made no attempt to accompany them to and from the school. He knew, as did they, that Madame Cleverige would never have countenanced the intimacy which was growing up between him and Margaret. There was a tacit understanding among the three that his name should not be mentioned at Cleverige Hall. This was the only aspect of the affair which greatly troubled Adèle. She was encouraging the girl to practise deceit.

To her extreme surprise, she could not make Howard see her view-point.

"What can you expect?" he said, shrugging his shoulders, when she appealed to him. "I don't pretend to like it, of course, but then, I don't like any of this business. If I had my way, I'd go to Cleverige Hall and claim Margaret before the entire world, and be happy and proud to do it. Since you forbid that course, don't ask me to bother over incidental annoyances."

Adèle, more and more disquieted, finally spoke to Margaret of her uneasiness. For the first time she noticed a trace of stubbornness in the girl.

"It's none of Madame's business," she declared, a pout on her rosy lips. "Of course she would disapprove, but since you and Bob think it's all right—"

"You've told Bob?" asked Adèle quickly, surprised and relieved.

An embarrassed flush mounted to Margaret's cheek and she did not meet the violet eyes fixed so anxiously upon her.

"Y-es," she said, slowly. She hesitated, then continued with visible reluctance: "That is, I mentioned that you had introduced a very pleasant young man and that he had gone about with us once or twice. I didn't think it necessary to mention exactly how often." The confession was wrung from her against her will, but there was a note of defiance in the tone.

"What have you told—'Bob'—about me?"

Adèle had often wished to put this question, but the opportunity had never seemed ripe.

"Oh, everything!" cried Margaret, enthusiastically. This was a topic more to her liking. "I've written just reams about you—how pretty you are, and how good you've been to me, and where we've gone. Why, I've even described the gowns you wear." Adèle gasped. "He is always pleased over anything which interests me and he is particularly glad for me to have such a wonderful friend. I'm so anxious to have him meet you. I keep begging him to run down when you are here, but he hasn't been able to manage it. You'll like him, I know, and of course he'll adore you."

"Why haven't you told him about Howard?" persisted Adèle. She disliked to bring a shadow to the bright face before her, but felt she must get to the bottom of the matter.

"Well," acknowledged Margaret, with evident unwillingness. "I haven't really thought it out, but I suppose I'm afraid he'll consider it his duty to tell Madame, and she—oh, you know what *she* would do. I think it's lots nicer having Howard with us, so naturally I don't want it forbidden. Besides, it's rather fascinating and romantic, keeping it secret." A delicious pink flooded her cheeks.

Adèle's face went white and a

strained, haunted look darkened the violet eyes.

"Margaret"—the girl looked up, surprised at the tense tone and the pallid, tight-set lips—"I'm going to tell you something that I've never told anyone before. It isn't easy for me to speak of it, but I want you to know."

"But, Mrs. Wilson," pleaded Margaret, thoroughly uncomfortable and a little bit shocked, "please don't—I'd rather you didn't—I—I—"

"When I was a couple of years younger than you are," said Adèle, unheeding the interruption, "I did something wrong. Never mind now what it was; that part doesn't matter. The thing that counts is that I tried to stifle my conscience by calling it 'fascinating and romantic,' and by insisting that I was not hurting anyone by my actions. In my heart I knew the truth, and it has poisoned my whole life."

She seemed very fragile and helpless as she leaned back, her tiny hands half buried in the huge black fox muff. Margaret glanced at her half timidly.

"Why, Mrs. Wilson," she exclaimed, wonderingly. "I can scarcely believe it. You seem so—so happy that it never occurred to me that you could have any troubles."

"Oh, I've had my share," said Adèle, more lightly. "Perhaps the chief one has been that I've had no children. Geo—Mr. Wilson and I have always hoped for a baby, but—"

"I love babies," declared Margaret, her spirits rising as rapidly as they had sunk; "they're such dear, cuddly little things. I hope," she added softly, "that when I'm married I'll have a large family."

"I couldn't wish anything finer for you," said Adèle, fondly placing an arm about the tall, slender girl and drawing her close. "First of all, though, deserve it. The greatest punishment in the world is the consciousness that you've done wrong. Truly, dear, I've felt that every sorrow, every disappointment, every trouble that has come to me in all these years has been God's way of show-

ing me how deeply I sinned. I tell you this because I don't want you to suffer as I have suffered—to regret something that can't be undone. Deceit is never worth while." She smiled bitterly, thinking of her present masquerade. . .

Adèle had become greatly attached to Margaret and dreaded the thought of passing out of her life. She knew, however, that this was inevitable, for she could not hope to play the part of Mrs. Wilson indefinitely. Already she had had some narrow escapes from betraying herself and she appreciated that this danger would become greater rather than less.

She had come to desire a marriage between Howard and Margaret almost as keenly as the young man himself. She knew that George would never dare risk seeing the girl, once she was the wife of Stone. It was the best possible barrier between the two. Even chance meetings would not occur, for Howard had recently been transferred to the Philadelphia office of his firm, and would be located there permanently.

Stone had never faltered in his intention to win Margaret, although his suit did not prosper as rapidly as he had anticipated. His ardour deepened with every sight of the girl and his moods alternated between hope and despair, according to her treatment of him. As for Margaret herself, neither of the two who loved her so well could determine her feelings in the matter. With each separate interview she affected a different attitude toward Howard, sometimes so shy, with downcast lids and fluttering breast, that he feared to speak lest he startle her, and again so frankly his good comrade that he could not conceal his joy. Always, however, she held him, lightly captive to her slightest whim.

VII

One afternoon in February when Adèle appeared at Cleverige Hall, Margaret, the stately, forgetful of her usual dignity, came rushing into the reception room and, catching up the tiny figure

of her friend, hugged her in uncontrolled excitement.

"I hope you don't mind," she pleaded, contritely, as Adèle reached up to straighten the smart hat which perched so lightly on her dark curls. "I just couldn't help it. It's too wonderful!"

"I don't mind in the least," laughed Adèle, gazing admiringly at the girl's flushed cheeks and dancing eyes. "But what's it all about?"

"You'd never guess!" declared Margaret. She seated herself decorously on the edge of one of the ugly carved chairs which stood about, but she could not control the impatient tapping of her high heel on the polished floor. "You'd never guess, because it's so entirely unexpected. It's about Genevieve, first of all. Mrs. Baker has decided to take her from school and give her a perfectly gorgeous coming-out ball on the twenty-seventh." She paused to take in the effect of her announcement.

"Of this month?" asked Adèle, much surprised. "Isn't it rather late in the season for a *début*?"

"Yes, but Mrs. Baker was going to have the ball anyway, and Genevieve begged and begged, so at last she gave in. It's to be a really marvelous affair, the finest ever given in Philadelphia. All the girls are wild about it."

"Of course they are. But come, shall we go out? You can tell me the details in the car."

"Wait," exclaimed Margaret impressively. The soft brown *crêpe de chine* she was wearing accentuated the rich ivory of her skin and the yellow gleams in her strange eyes. She had never looked more beautiful. "You haven't heard the best part. Mrs. Baker has offered to present me at the same time, and Bob says that she may. Now, isn't that glorious? Do you wonder I'm nearly frantic with delight?"

"No, indeed," declared Adèle, with the proper amount of sympathy. She wondered what George thought of this new turn of affairs—if he was pleased over Mrs. Baker's offer, or not. "So your school days are to end. When do you leave?"

"Tomorrow morning. Genevieve's upstairs packing now. Only think, after this we'll have maids to do all that for us! It seems too stupendously perfect to be true! I feel as though I were dreaming!"

"How about your clothes?" asked Adèle, practically.

"We leave for New York to-morrow night, and will get everything we need there. Of course, we'd rather have French frocks, but the war has spoiled all that anyway, so we'll do very nicely in New York. I'm not worrying about what I'm to wear; I'm thinking of the fun we'll have—dances and receptions and balls and flowers and men who'll be devoted to us and—oh, everything!"

"Margaret, have you any money—I mean in your own right?"

The girl looked startled.

"Why," she said uncertainly; "I—I suppose so. I don't know. I never thought to ask. When I want anything, I simply tell Bob and he sees that I get it. But oh, Mrs. Wilson," returning to the theme which filled her thoughts to the exclusion of all else; "I've the grandest plan, if only you'll consent—and I'm sure you will, for you've been so good to me already."

"What is it?" questioned Adèle, smiling at the girl's enthusiasm.

"Oh, it's perfect! I thought of it at once, and Mrs. Baker and Bob both approve."

"Has Bob been here?" Adèle unconsciously ruined her dainty white satin trunk as she crushed it between her palms.

"Why, of course," impatiently. "He came over at once to meet Mrs. Baker and thank her, but he could only stay a couple of hours. It wasn't satisfactory at all."

"I see. Well, go on and tell me about this remarkable plan of yours."

Margaret moved her chair closer.

"We want you," she explained; "to help me select my frocks. Oh, do say that you will! You have such exquisite taste, and besides it will be awfully exciting and just heaps of fun. Say yes!"

Adèle caught her breath sharply as she gazed into the eager face before her. So this was to be the parting of the ways! It had come sooner than she expected and she was not prepared for it, but she well knew that she could never hope to blind Mrs. Baker as she had Madame Cleverige. She would retire in good order.

"I'm so sorry, dear," she said softly, receiving an added pang as the bright light faded from the girl's eyes. "I have to go to Chicago on business and it is likely to be protracted."

"Not till the twenty-seventh?" in quick alarm. "Promise you'll be back before then. Mrs. Baker wishes you to receive with her. She knows how kind you've been to me, and—"

"I'll probably be back in time," said Adèle, reassuringly. She saw that this blow must come later. "Run, get your hat, Margaret. Howard's waiting for us."

"Let him wait," returned Margaret. "It won't hurt him, and truly I'd rather just talk to you this afternoon. Genevieve and I have so much we want to discuss with you, so we'll have tea up in our rooms."

"Mrs. Baker will ask Howard to her ball?" questioned Adèle. At least she could do this much for the young man.

"Oh, yes," carelessly. "Genevieve saw to that at once. She's crazy about him."

"Genevieve!" exclaimed Adèle, astonished. "Has she met him?"

"No, but she's fallen in love with his picture. He gave me one, you know, week before last. The girls are keen over it. He is good-looking."

That afternoon Adèle returned to New York in a most unenviable state of mind. Howard, gloomy and disheartened over their non-appearance, had been awaiting her at the station and her explanation had failed to raise his spirits.

"It's no use," he affirmed, dismally. "If she cared for me even a little, she'd have insisted on coming to me. She'd have wanted to share her pleasure with me first of all."

"Don't be too hard on her," pleaded Adèle. "Remember, this is all new to her. She's extravagantly excited."

"Of course she's excited, but that doesn't alter facts. No, I may as well accept it. She's not in love with me. It's only her goodness of heart that has allowed me to hang around as I have."

Adèle secretly feared that this was the truth and she was glad when the starting of the train forced him to leave her alone with her thoughts, depressing though they were.

So this was the end! She had kissed Margaret good-bye with unusual tenderness, gazing with tear-blinded eyes into the face which had grown so dear to her, for she knew that, except through some unseeable turn of fate, she would never see it again. She shivered and drew her fur coat closer about her shoulders. Never see Margaret again—Margaret with her handsome face and charming ways! Adèle couldn't bear the thought.

Why, oh, why, had she not used her own name at Cleverige Hall? She had acted on crazy impulse and now she was reaping the fruits of the deceit against which she had warned Margaret so grandly only a few days ago. She had, by her own fault, lost her right to a place in the girl's life. And it had all been so useless, so unnecessary. As Mrs. George Wade she could have been of infinite help to Margaret, doing for her in New York what Mrs. Baker planned to do in Philadelphia. She would have held her position against all comers, secure in her rectitude. Then it would have been George's turn to run away!

VIII

To run away literally was Adèle's plan, formed instantly when Margaret had told her of the proposed shopping expedition. She knew that she would have to leave the city while the girl was there or face the constant risk of a chance meeting. Where should she go? It must be at once, and for several

weeks. As the train rushed on through the early dusk, she cogitated.

"George," she said, later in the evening, "I've been thinking of suggesting that Grace and Ed Russell open up Valewood—I mean this week, perhaps even to-morrow—for a house party. We've never been there at this season and the skating and skiing are fine, so Grace has always said."

"Bully idea," declared Wade, emphatically. A worried frown which had puckered his brows since dinner disappeared. "It's a good stunt, and I know you'll enjoy it."

"You also!" exclaimed Adèle, in quick alarm.

"Impossible," he returned. "Fact is, dear, I'm up to my neck in work and must cut out all frivolities for the next few weeks—no dinners away from home, no theaters, no anything but bed for little Georgie. I'll be glad to have you out of town, for I'll be dull company, I know, hanging about the house."

Adèle smiled drearily. She understood his play. He also was afraid of meeting Margaret in New York, or rather of encountering, while with her, some acquaintance who would call him by his own name. He was beginning to comprehend just how untenable was his position.

"Never mind, dear," said Adèle, hiding the wound which tore at her heart. "I'll stay with you and we'll do the fireside act together."

"Indeed you won't," he protested with vigor. "I'll call up Ed now. They're dining with the Nortons."

In vain did his wife demur. Ed and Grace were charmed with the plan and before the evening was over Adèle was irrevocably committed to the party, which grew into larger and larger proportions. Plenty of their friends were delighted to get away from gaieties which were beginning to pall. On one point only Adèle stood firm. George wanted her to stay the month out. She determined to return on the twenty-sixth—to know definitely whether or not he would attend Mrs. Baker's ball.

She thought he would not, but she must be sure. Anything was better than this suspense.

The party at Valewood was a decided success. The weather was perfect, clear and cold, while a heavy fall of snow during the previous week made sleigh rides and skiing parties very tempting. In the evenings the entire crowd would gather in the great hall and, with cheery informality, toast marshmallows, pop corn or dance to the music of the Grafonola.

Grace and Ed Russell were enraptured with the whole affair, declaring warmly that Valewood should always be opened at this season, and their guests seemed equally enchanted. No one could have guessed that Adèle, the leader in every frolic, the originator of every new form of entertainment, carried the only heavy heart among them. With her no revelry was gay enough, no laughter sufficiently loud to drown out her longing for George, her heart hunger for Margaret. One thing these days taught her—and it amazed her more than any discovery she had made in her whole life. She loved Margaret better than herself. The girl's welfare, the girl's happiness meant more to her than all else. George, Howard, she herself were of little importance beside Margaret Rice.

True to her resolution, Adèle returned to New York on the twenty-sixth, to be welcomed by George with open arms. Hungrily he gathered her to him in an embrace which left her flushed and palpitating.

"Don't go away again, Adèle," he whispered. "The house has been infernally lonesome without you. Let's stay together hereafter, no matter what comes!"

Adèle forebore to remind him that the trip had been made at his express orders. Poor fellow, he had no talent for the double life! She noted with grieved concern the havoc wrought by the past weeks. He was feeling the strain and it told upon his appearance. His hair was graying at the temples, his eyes showed lack of sleep, and his

mouth twitched nervously at unexpected moments.

They dined out that evening, going on to a couple of dances where Adèle felt that they must at least put in an appearance. Both she and Wade danced well and enjoyed it, so that once upon the floor, it was always late before they could get themselves away.

All next day Adèle was distraught, unable to concentrate her attention upon anything. How she envied Mrs. Baker, who was a witness to Margaret's eager anticipations, a participant in her raptures! Most cruel of all, Mrs. Baker did not appreciate her privileges—her first interest was in Genevieve—Margaret's share in it all was of minor importance.

Adèle had refused all invitations for the evening, a course which met with Wade's hearty approval. Probably he too realized how difficult it would be to simulate an interest in his friends' idle chatter when his whole heart and soul were with Margaret in Philadelphia.

Dinner was eaten in silence. Adèle did not feel equal to her usual light-hearted volubility. She tried at first but, meeting little response from George, soon ceased her efforts. What was happening in Philadelphia? How was Margaret enduring the strain of these last hours? Waiting was so hard—she remembered the rapturous agony of her own début. Would the evening bring to the girl all that she had hoped? And afterward—what did life hold for her?

The servants, marveling at so quiet a meal, stepped about noiselessly, removing dishes that had scarcely been tasted. At last Adèle arose.

"Suppose we have coffee in your den," she suggested. "It's cosy there and you can smoke while I glance through some prints Phil sent in today. He says that I may keep some of them, and now is as good a time as any to make a selection."

George's den was a tiny room on the second floor, comfortably furnished but seldom used. It was long since either of the Wades had passed an evening

there, and this one was not destined to be a success. The prints proved less admirable than had been expected and George, after a cursory glance at them, allowed his cigar to go out and sat staring fixedly at the evening paper which, unread, was spread across his knees. Adèle yawned openly.

"I'm going to bed," she said, rising and patting George's cheek as she passed toward the door. Usually this would have been the signal for him to grasp the hand and draw her down to his knees, but tonight he merely nodded indifferently.

"All right," he agreed. "I'll sit here for a while and finish my cigar." He reached for a fresh match.

In her own room all desire for sleep left Adèle. She lingered over her toilette as long as possible, and then tried to read for a while, but neither book nor magazine could hold her attention. Louise hovered about, much disturbed. For some time now, the peculiar behavior of the Wades had been the subject of comment below stairs and the girl wondered if there could be serious trouble brewing.

At last Adèle slipped into bed, where she tossed restlessly for hours before finally falling asleep. Despite this fact she wakened early and immediately rang for Louise.

"Please send out for all the Philadelphia papers," she said. "I want them all, and as soon as possible."

"Does Madame wish new copies, or those which Mr. Wade ordered?" asked Louise.

"Oh—" Of course George would have attended to that. "Mr. Wade's will do nicely if he has finished with them."

"Mr. Wade read them before breakfast, Madame."

"Very well. Get them—quickly!"

Adèle slipped a pale blue silk lounging jacket over her *robe de nuit* and, pushing several lace-trimmed pillows against her back, cuddled into the blankets. When Louise brought in the papers, she took them eagerly, at the

same time motioning for the girl to leave.

"Madame's breakfast?"

"Not now. I'll ring when I'm ready."

For the next hour no sound was heard in the room save the rustling of the sheets. Adèle's face glowed with happiness as she read. Margaret's expectations were justified—Mrs. Baker's ball was unquestionably the event of the Philadelphia season and the papers outvied each other in their efforts to do it justice. The accounts were fulsome and satisfactory—long lists of the guests and descriptions of their gowns; particulars regarding the elaborate decorations, with several pictures of the ballroom—a new feature of the Baker establishment, just completed and covering the entire top floor. There had been a cotillion and the favors were enumerated at great length: all the absurdly extravagant baubles considered necessary on such an occasion.

Mrs. Baker was evidently a woman of much originality, and many of her arrangements were unique, but Adèle skipped these shamelessly in her desire to reach the description of the débütantes. As she had expected, the two girls had a paragraph all to themselves in each paper—a frothy account of their gowns, accomplishments, beauty, and certain popularity in the set to which they were being presented. Here Adèle felt a warm glow about her heart—Margaret received the greater share of the journalistic encomiums. Adèle's pride was unbounded. She smiled happily at her own reflection in the mirror across the room, then turned back and re-read every word.

When Louise entered with the long-delayed breakfast tray, she rejoiced to find that her mistress had recovered all her old-time gaiety, dimpling and sparkling in a perfect avalanche of chatter.

IX

That afternoon as Adèle was crossing the hall on her return from her ride Thomas stopped her.

"There's a letter here, Madame, ad-

dressed to Mrs. Ralph Wilson. Does Madame wish me to forward it, or is it a guest whom Madame expects?"

Adèle extended her hand impetuously. She had seen that writing only once, but she recognized it with a thrill of pleasure, which increased as she noticed how heavy the envelope was.

"I'll take charge of it," she said, slipping it into her bag. "Tell Louise not to come to me until I ring."

She hurried to her room where, tossing aside her wraps, she pulled out the many sheets crowded with writing, then seated herself to enjoy at her ease the unexpected happiness. This was the letter:

My dear, dear Mrs. Wilson: Not until this moment have I realized that I have never known your address! It would have come to me sooner I suppose had I been less busy. I am so *excited*. I simply must tell you of our *wonderful, wonderful* ball! Always before when I've been in this mood I've written to Bob, but somehow you have taken his place. I feel closer to you, *closer even than to him*. It's queer, but I presume it's because you are a *woman*.

It's nearly six o'clock—in the morning! Mrs. Baker would be wild if she knew I was not getting my beauty sleep. We've a dozen engagements for to-morrow—I mean to-day—and, of course, she wishes us to look our very best. I can't sleep, though, until I've had my talk with you. How I wish it might be a real talk, *face to face*! There are a thousand things which can't be said even in the longest of letters—things which I know you would be *interested* to hear.

The ball was *perfect*. It was like *fairyland*. I can't even pretend to describe it, but this much I do know—I never had such a good time in my life, and I fancy I never shall again. I'll dream about it all for months.

I kept hoping and hoping and hoping, up to the very last moment, that you would come. It seemed as though you *must* come, I wanted it so intensely. I had one other disappointment: Bob also failed to show up. He expected to be here, naturally, but some friend of his took that very inconsiderate time to *die* and he couldn't leave. Of course I'm not quite so heartless as that sounds, but I didn't know the man, and I *did* want Bob here. Fortunately no one told me of his absence until late—I kept looking for him and thought that I had simply missed him in the crowd. The place was packed, *packed*. I was fairly dizzy from meeting so many people. Toward the last, the faces were a single blur before me. But

I don't want to tell you things which will be in the papers—I'll enclose clippings.

Thank you so much for the *exquisite bracelet*. It is *darling*, of course, as would necessarily be the case with anything of *your* selection. I am so proud of it. Bob gave me a lovely lavallier, diamonds and pearls. It is too *dainty* for words, but I can't describe it, for it's quite out of the ordinary. It was designed especially for me by a friend of Bob's, a Mr. Edward Russell. You must come and see it. I am keen to show it to you.

Genevieve and I had the most *royal* time. I haven't adjectives enough to particularize—but you can guess all that I would say. Everyone was so kind to us. We received flowers until I was *positively ashamed*—the house is *filled* with them. They came from everyone—from Bob and Howard and the girls at the school, and from innumerable men of whom we'd neither of us ever even heard.

We are to have one wildly hilarious week, and then Lent will put a stop to the big affairs. Mrs. Baker says that we'll have just as much fun then, only everything will be a bit more exclusive. She thinks we'll like it even better, but I don't see how that could be possible.

I'm beginning to yawn dreadfully, so I suppose I really ought to go to bed. Do come back soon, soon, and hear all that I have to tell you. Surely your business is nearly finished—and I want to see you so much.

The papers haven't come and I want to have this mailed, so I'll send the clippings later.

With all love, your devoted

MARGARET.

Adèle read this letter with glistening eyes, exultant that it had been written to her and not to George. So all had gone well. How impulsive Margaret was—how enchanted with her flowers and her gifts! Dear girl! What would she have thought could she have known that her bracelet had been designed by the same talented hand that had evolved the lavallier. Ed Russell had distinct ability along these lines and, since he was good-natured and always willing to be imposed upon, his many friends were in the habit of calling him to their assistance whenever they wished a particularly attractive gift for any special occasion.

Adèle, impatient to tell Margaret how complete was her sympathy and understanding, hastened to her writing table, but after the first few sentences she

paused abruptly, her pen poised in midair. It would be easy to have her letters mailed in Los Angeles, to have Margaret's replies forwarded from there, but, for the girl's sake, would it not be better to let matters rest as they were? The break had been made and now, with a thousand new interests crowding into her life, Margaret would feel the parting less than if it came later. Adèle ruthlessly sacrificed her own desires.

Once again life fell into its usual tenor, and Adèle resumed her position as a popular member of the young married set. With this difference, however: for the first time in her existence she eagerly scanned the society columns, searching for mention of Margaret. When the girl's picture appeared on the front page of an illustrated weekly, she rejoiced openly, showing it to her friends as "an attractive face" and hugging close to her heart their ready agreement. Then she subscribed to a clipping bureau that she might miss nothing that appeared in print regarding the girl. She formed a scrap-book of all such material and it soon reached large proportions, for Miss Rice had created a decided sensation and the papers kept her constantly before the public eye.

Adèle had another source of information regarding Margaret. Howard had fallen into the habit of writing two or three times each week and his letters contained few sentences which did not deal with the girl. Despite his own work and Margaret's butterfly existence, he managed to see her more frequently than when she was at Cleverige Hall. Mrs. Baker, knowing full well the young man's influential connections and sound financial status, was evidently encouraging the intimacy. Such a match, made under her protection, would reflect credit upon her, a fact which she realized perfectly. Nor had she any reason to feel jealous on Genevieve's account. Her own daughter's popularity was unquestioned, so she could afford to rejoice in the success of both her *débutantes*.

Howard Stone had not taken the trouble to study out all this, but its results showed in the continued buoyancy and hopefulness of his letters. He felt that at last his suit was beginning to prosper. He was a constant visitor at the Baker home, coming and going with a freedom enjoyed by few of their acquaintances.

Adèle exulted with him, happy to think that Margaret's future would be entrusted to so high principled a man. Her pleasure was the greater because she was confident that she had won back George's whole devotion. She knew, through Howard, that "Bob" had not been to see Margaret since her début. His non-appearance on that occasion had caused a breach which seemingly was still widening. Margaret was deeply distressed over the simultaneous and uncalled for desertions of Mrs. Wilson and her beloved guardian, on both of whom she had felt she could rely. This mortification drew her closer to Howard than anything else could possibly have done, for he shared her resentment, writing wrathfully to Adèle that she was acting unfairly.

He could not guess, as did his cousin, that it was his own presence which had caused the complete ceasing of "Bob's" visits to his ward. Wade would never chance meeting his wife's cousin when masquerading under a false name.

Adèle often looked at George with speculative eyes. Was he as indifferent to the situation as his appearance would indicate? Or did his heart ache as hers did for a sight of the girl they both loved? She wondered if she succeeded in concealing her real feelings as completely as did he. It was a miserable business, and the end was not yet.

X

One rainy day in April Howard Stone's card was brought to Adèle before she had finished dressing. Her heart sank, for she knew it must be serious trouble which would bring him to New York in such weather and at such an hour. Had he come to the city on

business he would have telephoned and asked if it was convenient for her to see him. Howard was punctilious in certain matters. Cowering mentally, but with unruffled demeanor, she slipped into a *négligée* and received him in her boudoir. A single glance at his face confirmed her misgivings.

"What is it, Howard?" she demanded. "I can see that something is wrong. Tell me quickly!"

Stone stood leaning over the back of a chair in such a position that she could not see his expression.

"Last night I asked Margaret to marry me."

"Oh!" Adèle heaved a sigh of relief. She didn't know what she had feared, but at least this was not irrevocable. "I take it that she refused you."

"Yes."

"Cheer up, boy!" said Adèle, sinking into a chair and motioning him to place a stool at her feet. He did not heed the hint, did not even see it. His thoughts were on more important matters. "Don't lose heart at the first failure. She'll change her mind."

"No, she won't. She's going to marry her guardian."

Adèle sat as if turned to stone.

"Her—guardian?" she gasped at last, her nostrils quivering. "Did you say her guardian? Why, Howard, it's impossible!"

"I wish to heaven it were," he burst out, half beside himself with anger and disappointment. "Oh, Adèle, it's damnable to tie up her youth with that old man from a sense of duty."

"It's a case of duty, is it?" She breathed more freely. "I'm sure there's a mistake somewhere, dear. Tell me all about it."

"You needn't think I could make a mistake," he insisted, but with less violence. "It affects my whole future, and hers. Of course I know that she's too good for me, but at least I'm somewhere near her age. Tucker may be a fine man in many ways—Margaret declares that he is—but I say that he is brutally selfish to make love to a girl still in her teens."

"Who says that he has made love to her?" demanded Adèle. Howard was not looking at her, but she, feeling that all her props were giving way, turned her chair so that its high back cut off his view.

"Margaret herself told me," he said, bitterly. "Oh, I suppose I ought not to blame him for falling in love with her. I don't see how anyone could help it, but I've been sure that she cared for me and this thing bowls me over. It's so unexpected."

"Tell me about it," said Adèle, wearily. "You're beginning at the wrong end. Like all lawyers, you make a poor witness."

"Well," began Howard, with some hesitation. "It's not easy to give an account of that sort of an interview. A man's rather apt to lose his head and not know exactly what did occur."

"You do your part," suggested Adèle, a faint smile showing about the corners of her mouth; "and I'll try to fill in the gaps."

"As I have told you in my letters," he said, his finger seeking his lips in his characteristic gesture; "I've been with Margaret constantly since she went to live with the Bakers. I had one advantage over the other fellows—I had known her before they met her. I pushed this handicap to the limit, and Mrs. Baker was kind enough to help me. All round I have been feeling very confident, for Margaret certainly seemed to like me better than any of the others. It wasn't seeming," he added, stubbornly; "I *know* she cares for me."

"About Tucker," prompted Adèle. She was feverish to know what part George played in the affair. "You wrote me that he hadn't been there."

"Nor had he, until last Wednesday, when he blew in entirely without warning. By pure luck he found Margaret at home. She threw over all her engagements and remained with him. That was only natural—any girl would have done as much for her guardian. It doesn't argue anything special."

"Granted," agreed Adèle, impatiently. "Go on."

"After her interview with him, Margaret changed completely. She was abstracted, nervous, jumping and changing color whenever anyone spoke to her. I'm not sure that the others noticed it, but of course I'm particularly observant where she is concerned. But even I didn't connect her mood with Tucker's call until after last night. I was conceited enough to rather believe that a sudden realization of her feeling for me was the cause of her jumpiness." He paused somewhat apologetically.

"What happened last night, Howard? Get to the point. Don't you see that I'm on the rack?"

Stone whirled around at the tone, but the tall chairback concealed his cousin's slender form.

"By Jove, Adèle, it's good of you to mind so much," he declared; "and I'm a brute to trouble you. Still, I'm going to do it. Perhaps you can see something in it all that I have missed." His brows drew together, and again his forefinger tapped his lips lightly as he spoke. "Last night we attended a dance at the Drakes. I arrived late and found to my surprise that Margaret had saved only one dance for me, the first time that ever happened. I thought nothing of it, however, for she is very popular. The conservatory was dimly lighted. Colored shades were over all the bulbs and the place was fitted up into those little twosing corners—you know the sort of thing. Margaret didn't want to go in, but I persuaded her and—it happened."

"I understand," said Adèle, sympathetically. "It usually happens when you get the right couple in a dimly lighted twosing corner."

"Unfortunately this wasn't the right couple. I rather overwhelmed Margaret at first, and she responded—I give you my word she did—but after a moment she got up and walked away. Oh, it was secluded enough for that," he added, mistaking Adèle's sudden movement for disapproval. "She wouldn't let me touch her again, but began to cry and to say that she was a wicked girl and that it had been only a flirta-

tion and a whole lot of that rot. Then she ended up by saying that she's going to marry this Tucker."

"That's what I don't understand," declared Adèle, in a strange, strained voice. "It would be too cruel, too cruel! He must be crazy! Did Margaret say anything else?"

"Oh, a whole lot, but it didn't help matters any. She's made up her mind—I could see that plainly enough—and you know she can be very obstinate sometimes. I'm afraid she'll carry it through."

"Do you think—that she—cares for him—in that way?" asked Adèle, slowly. She felt as if she were moving in a horrible nightmare and must soon wake up.

"She says she does, but I think she cares for *me*," returned Howard, red and defiant. "I'm sure of it, but that won't alter cases if she has really made up her mind to marry Tucker."

"When are you going back?"

"At once." Then, divining her intention, he added: "Oh, Adèle, could you?—would you? You've more influence with her than anyone else, and perhaps you can make her see reason. I'll be eternally grateful, but it's a rotten day."

Adèle's face was still averted as she arose.

"I'll go with you," she said. "Just wait a moment while I change."

XI

It was still raining when they reached Philadelphia, a steady downpour rendered the more unpleasant by a high, chill wind. Adèle dismissed Howard at the station after he had helped her into a taxi and given the Baker address. Affairs had reached a crisis where she could not stop at trifles, and if Mrs. Baker learned her real identity she would accept her punishment, the heaviest part of which would be the loss of Margaret. George was already lost to her. She clung to Margaret absurdly, pathetically.

Fate favored her, however. The Ba-

kers were resting, and Margaret, rushing down on receiving her card, had not paused to waken them. Adèle would not permit her to repair this omission. She was observing with concern the dark circles under the eyes, the hurt expression about the mouth. Margaret's appearance evidenced a sleepless night.

However, she greeted her friend with all her old excitability, flooding her with questions and recounting at length all that had happened since they had parted. It was half an hour or more before Adèle could bring herself to interrupt the spell by mentioning the object of her visit.

"Howard rode over with me," she said, watching narrowly to see the effect of her words.

Margaret changed color.

"You've seen Howard?" she questioned, stiffly. Her pretty animation was all gone. "I suppose—he told you."

"Yes," answered Adèle, longing to take the girl in her arms, but feeling that she must proceed with discretion. There must be no false steps. "And, oh, my dear, I'm so sorry. I had hoped you might care for him."

"I do care for him—as a friend." Margaret spoke slowly, deliberately choosing her words. "He has been so kind to me, and now—I've hurt him. Oh, Mrs. Wilson," impetuously, "I think I'm the most miserable girl in the world!"

"Can't you tell me about it, dear?" suggested Adèle. The desolation in the tawny eyes wrung her heart.

"There's so little to tell," shaking her head mournfully; "except that it's all my fault. I knew that Howard—loved me—and—I encouraged him. Not wantonly—please, Mrs. Wilson, don't think me that base. After all, though, intentions don't count for much unless they work out right, and I ought to have known. I ought to have known!"

"Known what?" Adèle was being very gentle. She did not wish to stop the confidence which she felt must surely come.

"That I could never marry Howard. It was so—so apparent, if I had only

had sense enough to see it. But I didn't, and now—" She paused helplessly.

"But why, *why*, dear? You must have some reason."

Margaret turned on her fiercely. The mouth was hard, the yellow eyes flashed fire.

"I didn't want to tell you—not even you—yet," she said; "but—I'm going to marry—Bob."

Adèle caught her breath sharply. Until now she had not believed it. She sat stunned, staring at Margaret, who, her ill humor over, burst into tears, sobbing wildly, distractedly. Adèle, stifling her own misery, took the girl in her arms, soothing her as best she could, really frightened at the vehemence of her grief.

"Don't, dear,—don't," she pleaded. "You shouldn't cry. Everything shall be as you wish it. Hush—hush—oh, my dear."

At length Margaret became more calm, but she did not withdraw from Adèle's embrace.

"Forgive me," she whispered brokenly, "for being so silly. I—I'm all unstrung."

"I can see that," assented Adèle. She frowned absently for a moment, then added: "Are you in love with 'Bob'?" In this was the crux of the situation.

She felt Margaret stiffen, but the answer came unhesitatingly.

"Yes."

Despite this affirmative, Adèle felt strangely comforted. She continued her examination with less bitterness.

"When is this—marriage—to take place?"

Margaret did not make an immediate reply, and Adèle repeated her question.

"I don't know," reluctantly. "That doesn't matter. He—hasn't asked me yet—in words." She flushed at some recollection.

"Oh!" Adèle brightened, but she went on relentlessly. "You want to marry him—is that it?"

"I want to do whatever he wants," said Margaret in a low voice. She did not like this probing, but saw no way to resent it.

"How can you know what he wants until he asks you?" persisted Adèle.

A wave of crimson, painful, deep, flooded Margaret's neck, her face, her brow. She did not look up.

"I *know*," she said, in a tone which admitted of no dispute. "I don't like to speak of it—but—he came to see me last week—and I *know*." Once started, she was unable to stop. "Without any warning he took me in his arms, and kissed me and kissed me. It was so—unexpected—that I didn't know how to take it at first, but he wasn't paying any attention to how I felt. He just held me for the longest time, as though he could never let me go. Then he rushed off without even saying good-bye. He had never acted like that before, and I couldn't help crying after he was gone. Not that I was sorry," she added hastily. "It was just the shock, I suppose."

There was a long silence in the room. Out in the hall a chime clock marked the hour, but neither heard it.

"Margaret," said Adèle, finally, "you love Howard." It was a statement of fact, not a question.

"No, no," protested the girl, jerking erect as though to ward off a blow. "You mustn't say such a thing. It isn't true."

"It is true," insisted Adèle, firmly. "He's the man you must marry, my dear one. You would wrong both him and yourself by any other course."

"Better that than to hurt Bob," declared Margaret. The stubborn look was about her chin. "You don't know—you *can't* know, Mrs. Wilson, all that Bob has done for me. Ever since I was a little girl I've longed for a chance to repay him, and if this will do it, why, I'd go through with it if it killed me!"

"He'll never permit it," said Adèle. "Why, child, he wouldn't accept such a sacrifice. He's not that kind of a man." She stopped abruptly. After all, did she know? George was proving himself very different from the George that she used to know. It was odd that, after their lifelong association, she could have been so mistaken in him.

"He'll never know." Untried though she was, Margaret did not lack character. The light of a high resolve upheld her and her voice was steady as she announced her purpose. "I love him well enough to go through with it without his ever guessing."

"But, my darling," urged Adèle, much distressed. "Is it worth while? Think of Howard. He has some rights to be considered."

"I don't want to think of Howard. His rights are nothing compared to those of Bob." Then she added, eagerly: "Don't you remember, Mrs. Wilson, you once gave me a long lecture about never doing anything I might regret? You said that an uneasy conscience was the most terrible punishment in the world. I've never forgotten your words, and I've been thinking about them a lot since Wednesday. Mrs. Wilson, if I were to go back on Bob now I'd never have another peaceful moment in my life. I'd never, never, forgive myself."

She had regained her self-control and Adèle saw that, secure in her belief that she was doing her duty, it would be impossible to move her.

XII

Adèle was becoming used to bearing her troubles silently, and, although on her return to New York she showed traces of her nerve-racking interview, they were less apparent than she had feared. Her spirits were at the lowest ebb. Much against her judgment, she had permitted Margaret to drag from her a half promise that she would not interfere in the girl's affairs. Thus when, according to previous arrangement, she had telephoned to Howard she had been able to give him little encouragement beyond telling him that she agreed in his own belief that Margaret returned his love.

She found George depressed and taciturn, and his mood reacted upon her. They sat silent until Adèle could bear it no longer. She must end this suspense.

"George." Her voice caught in her

throat, but she controlled its tremor. "Do you remember that years ago, when we were first married, we used to talk of divorce?"

Wade started violently.

"Yes," he said. There was no doubt of his attention.

"We decided then," continued Adèle, without looking up, "that if either of us ever wanted a divorce, the other would at once agree—that, in such a case, we would part friends—that I would go to Reno, and that—"

"Adèle, what have you been hearing?"

Adèle ignored the interruption.

"I've changed my mind, George," she said, with suppressed vehemence. "I will not permit you to get a divorce. I will fight it in every court. I—"

"Adèle!" exclaimed Wade, aghast. "Surely it's not so bad as all that. I know I've been foolish, but divorce—! You can't mean it."

"What did you expect?" demanded Adèle. "Haven't you thought that far ahead?"

George sprang to his feet and began pacing the room in a state of uncontrollable excitement.

"I've thought, and thought, and thought!" He brought his clenched fist against the other palm with each repetition of the word. "But it didn't get me anywhere, so of late I've just drifted."

Adèle faced him, her eyes blazing in sudden wrath. Wade had never seen her in such a passion.

"Was that fair to me?" she demanded. "Was it fair to the girl?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Wade. "Then you do know of her? Someone has been talking, just as I suspected."

Adèle turned an anguished face toward him, spreading out her palms pleadingly. Her anger had faded quickly: only the pain was left.

"Tell me the whole story, George," she begged. "I simply can't stand this uncertainty, this half-knowledge. Let's have it over."

"I suppose I'll have to tell you," Wade agreed unwillingly. "It seems

to be the only way. But, oh, my darling, I dread it! It will be a tremendous shock to you, and I fear you'll never forgive me."

"It would have been better," said Adèle, through dry lips, "if you had been honest with me from the first."

"I know it, and yet—I don't see now how I could have acted differently."

Adèle dropped into a chair and, covering her face with her hands, waited for him to speak. He seemed to be choosing his words.

"You remember our first marriage, and all that it led up to?" he said finally.

Adèle shuddered. That old skeleton—rattling after all these years!

"Could I ever forget it?" she groaned without raising her head. "It has never been out of my mind since. I feel that this present suffering is a direct result of that marriage."

"A more direct result than you know." Again he hesitated. "It was a wild escapade, our getting married that way, but it wasn't entirely our fault. They should have watched us more closely. And after all, Adèle, I have never regretted it."

"I have," declared his wife, with unexpected spirit. "Every moment since."

Wade winced.

"You have seemed happy."

"I have been happy," acknowledged Adèle; "but I have always felt that our money was not really ours. I think Father was unnecessarily harsh to will it to Uncle Phillip if I married before I was eighteen, but it was *his* money and he acted within his rights. Anyway, we didn't wait, so it ought to have gone to Phil and Howard."

"But, Adèle, how foolish! They are both rich."

"Just the same we forfeited the money," she insisted, obstinately.

"If it will make you any happier," he said, anxious to please her, "I'll turn it over to them tomorrow. We'll have plenty left without it."

Adèle shook her head wearily. This talk of money seemed trivial beside what was in her heart.

"Thank you," she said, without enthusiasm. "But that doesn't help the other matter."

"To a certain extent it does," replied Wade; "for I rather suspect that Margaret—that's the girl's name. At any rate that is what she is called—Margaret Rice. I'll tell you her real name later. As I say, I think she's in love with Howard. She doesn't know it yet herself, but she has been writing about him constantly."

"Howard says—" began Adèle, but Wade interrupted quickly.

"So Howard is the one who has been talking? I didn't think he knew about me. Of course Margaret has my picture, but I fancied from something she said that he hadn't seen it."

"I don't believe that he has," replied Adèle, then added rather wildly: "Get on with your story, George. I can't stand much more."

"Poor girl, it is tough on you."

Wade tried to pull her to him, but she resisted with unlooked-for strength.

"I'm waiting, George. Go on."

He glanced at her uneasily. He would have deferred his explanation had he dared.

"Well, you know you were only sixteen when our baby was born."

"Since we are speaking plainly, George," interrupted Adèle, determined that for once he should know her whole heart, "I'll tell you that I've always thought that that was our punishment for our secret marriage."

"What was?"

"Baby being born dead."

"But—" began Wade, then came to a full stop.

"It was our punishment, George," she insisted; "or else we'd have had other children."

"Adèle!" Wade's voice was very gentle. "The baby was not born dead—that is the shock I have feared for you."

Adèle swayed to her feet. George caught her or she would have fallen.

"Not dead!" she gasped.

"No, dear. Don't you understand? Margaret is that baby. She is your own daughter, yours and mine."

"Margaret! I—I can't seem to grasp it. I—"

"We were both so young when she was born!" said Wade, soothingly. He was talking to give her time to recover. "It's no wonder we were frightened and made mistakes. I had nothing but my college allowance—not a cent. How could I support a family? So, when you were so ill there in Boston I had a long talk with the doctor, and—well, and he told you that the baby had been born dead." Wade paused a moment, and then went on. "I suppose I made a mess of it, but what was I to do? It was hard enough, God knows, to keep the whole thing from getting about. If it hadn't been for old Maggie we'd never have managed it. I gave Maggie the baby, and she kept it two years. I sent her what money I could dig up. Then, when we were married again, and everybody thought it was the first time, and your money came into my hands—well, I sent Maggie and the baby out to Montana, where Maggie had a brother. She married a ranch foreman out there and I bought the ranch for them. Let's see; when was that? It must have been about—"

Adèle came a step nearer. "Go on!" she ordered impatiently.

"Well, everything went well until poor old Maggie died. Then I found that there was no one left to take care of the baby. She was getting to be a big girl by then, and I went out to have a look at things. The result was that I brought her to Cleverige Hall. I knew, of course, that I was taking a risk, and I was always afraid—"

"Why didn't you tell me?"

"What good would it have done? Nobody knows about our first marriage. Nobody knows we ever had a baby. I thought that if I told you you'd be crazy to see the child and bring her home, and so it would get about and there would be all sorts of nasty gossip, and the poor little girl would have all that to live down. Yes; I made an infernal mess of things. I deserve all the blame. You know now what a fool a man can be—and how clumsy and idiotic. I got into the trap and then I couldn't get out."

Wade paused again, the picture of woe. Suddenly Adèle gave a shrill, exultant laugh and threw her arms around his neck.

"Oh, I'm so glad, so glad, so glad!" she cried. She was limp in his arms, the abominable tension of six months suddenly relaxed. She clung to him, fondled him, kissed him, whispering, "I love you, love you, love you!"

Wade, nonplussed, sought a fatuous, manlike solution.

"Yes, yes," he said, still uncertainly. "Yes, yes, of course you're glad. But wait until you see your daughter! She's—"

"I *have* seen her!" exclaimed Adèle. "I know her! I love her! She's mine! And *you* are mine!"

Wade looked his questioning astonishment.

"No, no," resisted Adèle. "Not now! I'll tell you some other time! All I want now is to love you!"

And again her arms were about his neck, and again she was covering him with kisses.



WHEN love dies there is no funeral—the corpse remains in the house.



THE moment everyone begins to believe a thing it ceases to be true. For example, the notion that the ugliest girl is the easiest to kiss.

ANNUNCIATION

Sung by the Voices of the Unborn

By Witter Bynner

I

O WOMEN, wonder-bringers, wakeners of earth,
We who are about to live salute you!
Angelic presences foretell our birth
To you, shaking your hearts with awe,
Transfiguring your faces with the pity
Which is God, thrilling your hands to write the law
On many a mountain and to bring it thence
To many a waiting city,
Till there shall be no other punishments
But love, no lovelier potencies than human birth. . .
The old who are about to die dispute you.
But we who are about to live salute you,
O women, wonder-bringers, wakeners of earth.

II

Think not of pain in store for us nor of our death
But only of our life. Give us your breath
With all its hope unbroken.
Believe in us, that in our later time
We may believe in you.
Plant in the mud about you and the grime
Seeds of the sublime.
And if your faith is more than dreamed and spoken,
As you have done so shall we dare to do.
Out of your faith make deeds, O make the world with it, and thus,
An image and a token
Of your faith, make us.

III

To our own mothers are we born,
Also to many mothers: yea,
To you who make beyond your walls and doors
A cradle of the world,
A home, a park, a confidence, a joy;
You who have patiently unfurled
The gleaming flags of peace:
And you, beloved, with no girl or boy
Singled from all of us; and you whose loves wandered away,
You who shall rather glorify than mourn.
New generations shall be born of us and none dispute you,
O women, wonder-bringers, wakeners of earth!
Destiny pours
Its fulness through you in our birth
And shall not cease.
For we who are about to live salute you. . .
We are yours!

CAMERON'S CONCLUSION

By P. F. Hervey

HUGH CAMERON'S life was so extremely like a succession of best sellers that at length he began to believe that the sugared tales of popular authors were as veracious as histories. Indeed, one can hardly blame the man. From his boyhood he found himself beginning every new line of endeavor with strikingly wretched prospects, and ending it with the most extraordinary good luck.

At ten years of age, for instance, he was abruptly transported from an obscure tenement where he lived with an old woman he called "Aunt" to a palace in the fashionable center of the town. He learned here that his name was not Tommy Barker, as he had hitherto supposed, but Hugh Cameron, and that he was the sole heir of a very wealthy and selfish gentleman of sixty who happened to be his grandfather. He immediately proceeded to melt the heart of this apparently crusty relative, and before long proved him to be in reality a rather sentimental and pious old person. Years later Cameron knew this period as his "Francis Hodgson Burnett Edition."

His grandfather died when he was twenty-one, leaving him the entire estate on condition that he should marry a certain wealthy heiress. In desperation he fled incognito to a dreary village in New England, and there conceived an infatuation for a poor but pretty schoolteacher. The schoolteacher, it is hardly necessary to inform the reader, was the heiress, who had sought refuge in that particular obscure town for the same reason that Cameron had himself.

Before he was to be married, however, it was imperative for him to take

a trip to South America to look over certain interests of his there. By this time he was hardly surprised when the vessel on which he sailed foundered on a desolate little island, and only two survivors, himself and a girl named Carline Herford, were saved. Cameron and Carline with commendable promptness proceeded to fall in love with one another. Unfortunately each was engaged to someone at home. Within two or three months after they had been stranded, a tramp steamer with a Jack London mate, and a W. W. Jacobs crew, conveniently picked them up and carried them back to civilization. They naturally expected that their return was to be their parting, but by a curious scheme Cameron's fiancé had died in the interim, and Carline's betrothed had made a runaway match.

It was at this precise moment, delaying the happy ending once more, that new complications entered the plot. To Cameron his love affair plainly assumed the aspects of a trilogy. The third volume began when a friend of his playfully poked him with a billiard cue, and he fainted dead away.

His doctor refused to make a definite statement concerning Cameron until he had consulted several other physicians and employed X-rays. At the end of a week's examination, Cameron learned that he had exactly six months longer to live. His heart was due to stop at the end of that period. Meanwhile if he would guard himself against future digs, he could partake of all the ordinary pains and pleasures of human existence.

They were tactful doctors and they told Cameron all these things with

splendid delicacy. But when he merely shrugged his shoulders and remarked: "So it's to be William J. Locke and the Rev. Charles Sheldon this time, eh?" they fancied for a moment that the shock had unhinged his brain.

To tell the truth, he had begun to be a little bored with his fictionalized career. "Is it always to be this way?" he asked himself. "Will I have a separation after my marriage, and be reunited by the usual child? Will I be a great financier, a popular detective, a rugged lumberman, and a Southern colonel, one after the other?" He shook his head gloomily and turned his steps to Carline Herford's door.

Since he presented the news as though it were merely another piece of foolery on the part of Fate, whom he jokingly termed his "publisher," Carline could not be expected to take it very seriously, nor did she.

Yet Cameron, actuated by a sense of duty as a character of popular fiction, made his will, referred to himself as "a battered philosopher with one foot in the grave," cultivated "whimsical" humor, gave largely to the Society for the Prevention of Puppy Dogs and other estimable charities, and read Genesis over three times.

Five months sped by and one day towards the end of the sixth month he called on Carline with the idea that it was doubtless the right time to announce himself saved. He was so confident of the latter fact that he did

not even trouble himself to get his doctor's confirmation of it.

While Carline was pouring tea, Cameron told her that he would like to set the date for their marriage. She handed him his cup and countered his question with another.

"Tell me, Hugh, when you, about six months ago, made up that ridiculous story that you were doomed, did you do it to give me a chance to break my engagement?"

"Upon my honor," replied Cameron, "the doctors promised me at the time that I would not be alive today. It wasn't any hoax, I assure you."

Then suddenly Carline cried out: "Why—why, Hugh, what's the matter?"

For Cameron's face had turned a vivid purple, and his cheeks were puffing out like a cavalry bugler's.

With an effort he got upon his feet. His face wore a puzzled, indignant expression, an expression that combined anger and amazement. Then abruptly his mouth opened, and four short, choleric words tumbled forth:

"It's the wrong ending!"

The next instant he collapsed upon the floor.

The newspapers the day after reported that he had died of heart disease at the age of twenty-three. Personally, however, I should say that his death was rather due to originality, and that his age was hardly more than two hundred thousand words.



HARSH things are often said about beauty, but, after all, it is only a beautiful woman who can fall in love without being ridiculous.



RULE No. 1: Don't think because a woman smiles, that she is necessarily pleased.



THE DANGEROUS INHERITANCE

By Louise Winter

SHE laid her hand on the sleeper's shoulder and stirred him.

"John," she said sharply, "John, Mildred hasn't come home."

He opened his eyes and stared blinkingly into his wife's face.

"Did you wake me up to tell me that?" He was not fully roused and his tone was impatient.

"But it's five o'clock."

John Melton sat up, shocked into complete wakefulness. "The devil! Where is she? Grace, why do you look like that—my God—don't you know?" He jumped out of bed and wrapped himself in a dressing-gown that lay on a chair conveniently near, and then he turned to question the woman who seemed to shrink from his stern gaze.

"She's with Pauline," she began.

"I never liked Mrs. Ferris, but she's a relative. Well?"

"Pauline took a party of young people up to the Grosvenor boys' house in Westchester for a dance. I did not want Mildred to go, bachelors are poor hosts for débutantes, but the other mothers consented—Mrs. Aldrich, Mrs. Lynes, Mrs. Taylor—and it seemed odd to Mildred. Besides, Pauline is my cousin and she came to see me, ridiculed my precautions, said the modern girl had to learn to take care of herself early, and so—"

"So you gave in. Have you telephoned to the Grosvenors?"

"Yes, at four. I didn't think a party should last longer than that—I got Arthur on the 'phone; he said they'd all gone, they ought to be home soon. I waited till five, then I rang up Pauline; her maid answered; she hadn't come in

—of course Mildred is all right, but it's almost daylight and it's so bad for a girl to be up all night." She was voicing a lesser fear and John Melton knew it.

"What men are with them?"

"Pauline promised to keep Mildred with her, and she took the Emerson boys and young Armstrong."

"Don't know them, do you?"

"Yes, the Emerson boys are twins, nice, clean young men, twenty-three, I think—grandsons of old Archer Emerson."

"And Armstrong?"

"He's a nephew of Martin's."

"Oh!" John Melton paused in his walk up and down the room to light a cigarette. His wife had sunk into an arm chair but she continued to watch the prowling figure of her husband from under lowered lids.

She was a handsome, slender woman of forty, with a smooth, creamy skin, hazel eyes that held mystery in their depths and a mouth that was curiously young with moist, red lips like a child's. She had that peculiar charm for men that is called fascination. Her mother, a worldly woman, recognizing this quality, had foreseen trouble and to avoid it had promptly married her to John Melton, rich enough to gratify her slightest wish, and big and masculine enough to satisfy her woman nature, and at first Grace had loved her husband deeply, passionately, but now after twenty years of married life there was not a flicker of the old feeling left. They had long since tacitly agreed each to go separate ways; they remained under the same roof for the sake of appearances, and as neither desired a

change of life partners they continued to pose in the eyes of the world at large as a fairly contented married couple. And they had one link that bound them together, Mildred, the child of their first year, whose coming had seemed to be the one thing needed to complete their perfect union.

John Melton had coarsened with the passing years, his taste had deteriorated, he confessed that he liked the very young, pretty, soft feminine slips who made demands on his purse but none on his intellect. He was conscious of his wife's friendship for Martin Douglas; it had gone on long enough to be one of the irregular relationships accepted by the members of their immediate set, and yet it had never caused outsiders to gossip. And so this young Armstrong, whom Grace refused to catalogue, was Martin Douglas' nephew. That complicated matters.

Melton struggled for words in which to put his question. Mildred was nineteen, but even he, her father, could detect the glorious promise in her developing womanhood.

"Why did you allow her to go if you don't trust Armstrong?" It was not what he had intended to say but it had its effect. His wife stiffened in her chair and faced him with terror in her eyes.

"But I do trust Douglas, he's dear, but he's only a boy—and—they must have stopped some place or they would have been home long before this."

"And no respectable place is open at this hour," he said, putting her fear into words. "Have you warned Mildred about drinking?"

"Yes, I don't think she would, but the others might, and excitement is contagious."

"Something might have happened to the car."

"But then we would have heard; there are fourteen in the party and it's an hour and a half since they started."

He had nothing more to offer, though he realized that she must have suffered agony before she carried her trouble to him.

Suddenly through the silence of the night came the sound of a closing door in the hall below, and Grace sprang to her feet.

"She's here, perhaps I've been foolish. I'm awfully sorry I got you up." She began apologizing for her fears, instinctively trying to shield the girl, but Melton did not answer.

He hesitated a moment, then he followed his wife as she went back to her own room and passed through that to her daughter's room beyond.

Mildred was standing in the middle of the floor, still shrouded in her heavy fur coat. She was very pale, but that might have been caused by fatigue. She turned slowly as her parents came in.

"Darling, it's frightfully late, we were so worried." Grace came at once to her rescue.

"It is late. I wanted to come home hours ago but Pauline wouldn't." The girl's tone was listless.

"Where were you?" It was John Melton who spoke.

Mildred raised dull eyes to his. "At the Grosvenors'."

"Yes, but after that?"

"We stopped some place for gasoline."

Her mother started at the readiness with which the lie tripped from her daughter's lips.

"You see, it's perfectly simple, we've been unnecessarily alarmed; we feared some dreadful accident, but you can go back to bed now, John, she's quite safe."

Melton frowned, but he knew he could do nothing against two women, and after a brief "good night, Mildred," he left them together.

The girl held her coat closed over her breast. "Won't you go to bed, too, Mother; I'm sorry you were worried," she said nervously, but Grace shook her head.

"I know it was not your fault, darling; were you and Pauline the only ones who stopped on the road?"

"Oh, no, we all stopped, and we danced a little."

Grace forced a smile. "Then it was you young folks who were thirsty, not the car." Her strong hands unclasped the slender fingers holding the protecting fur over her child's breast, and one glance at the shoulder from which the chiffon sleeve had been torn told its own tale of a struggle. There was a red mark on the white flesh, but the mother averted her eyes. "Come, dear, let me help you get undressed," she urged.

"Mother, they did say we needed gasoline, and I didn't take anything, really I didn't"—the strained young voice broke—"I only sweetened Douglas' glass once; I didn't want it; they laughed at me; the other girls took it, but I remembered you'd asked me not to, and then—"

"Yes, dear?"

"Douglas kissed me. That's all, Mother, and I'm so tired." The lace and chiffon dress slipped to the floor and she stood a slight, virginal figure in a filmy white garment until Grace put her protecting arms about her and held her close to her heart. She was a little child again, and when she was finally robed in her nightdress the mother half led, half carried her to the bed. She tucked the covers in at the sides, turned off the lights and then drew up a chair to the bedside.

"I'm going to sit here for a little while, darling; you may be nervous; fatigue often affects one that way." Grace's tender tones were balm to the tortured young spirit, and presently the long lashes fluttered to the white cheeks and the uneven breath became more regular. Once she stifled a sob, but after that she grew calmer, and the mother watching felt as if some great danger which had hovered over her beloved child had now passed on.

Grace did not blink at facts; Mildred was her daughter; she bore slight resemblance either physically or mentally to her father, although she had her being in the year when husband and wife were everything to each other. Mildred had inherited her mother's milk-white skin, free from the slightest blemish; her mother's thick,

bronze-colored hair; the hazel eyes which betrayed mysticism and hid passion, and the dewy red mouth which seemed to invite kisses. Had she also inherited her mother's desire to test her curious power over men and her lack of restraint once that power was unleashed? Grace must find out at once; she must put the girl on her guard; she had shrunk up till now from putting knowledge into immature hands, but after tonight, when her child's shoulder was bruised from a man's rough touch, it was time to unveil a secret to innocent eyes.

Mildred slept until noon. Her room had been darkened, and absolute quiet had been insured on her floor so that no sound should disturb the sleeper.

Grace, who was in her own room adjoining, heard a slight noise and she came softly to the open door.

Mildred was awake; she was staring into space and she was frowning.

"Well, darling, are you ready for your bath? I'm going to be your maid this morning; Celene has a headache." Grace came boldly into the room, passed through and turned on the water in the bathroom beyond. She poured in a liberal quantity of fragrant bath salts, and busied herself with small duties until she could call cheerfully: "Ready, daughter? While you're taking your bath I'll order breakfast."

Silently the girl crept out of bed and went into the bathroom, closing the door after her.

When she came out, wrapped in a warm robe, there was a dainty breakfast tray with its individual service on a small table in front of the fireplace where the pine logs were blazing.

"I'm not hungry, Mother dear."

"Not hungry, after dancing all night! Try a small piece of toast and see; I've had your coffee made a wee bit stronger this morning."

Mildred submitted. It was easier to pretend to eat than to persist in her refusal. She drank half a cup of well-diluted coffee and crumbled a slice of toast on her plate, and Grace was satisfied with the attempt.

"Suppose we go into my room while yours is being done up? I've also had a fire lighted; it's a nasty, raw day, and you can lie on my couch and rest. Come, dear."

Once again Mildred obeyed. She felt the force back of her mother's mild manner, and she needed all her strength for the scene which was bearing down upon her.

In Grace's room, with its marvelously tinted satin walls, its many mirrors, its soft-cushioned chairs, its vases of cut flowers—all those luxurious appointments dear to the soul of a woman of the world—the Duchesse couch was drawn up before the fire, and Mildred allowed herself to be gently pressed back against a nest of small pillows which fitted into every angle of her aching body.

Grace kept away until the warmth from the glowing logs had stolen into her veins and had soothed her somewhat, then she pulled up a chair and sat in such a position that Mildred should not be embarrassed by her mother's eyes.

"Darling, I want to speak to you, to tell you something," she began.

"Please, Mother," the slender fingers were pressed over the hot eyelids and Grace knew that it was Douglas Armstrong's face that the girl was trying to shut out.

"Darling, I wouldn't speak if it were not necessary, if you were not my daughter, if you had not inherited something from me."

The long body on the couch stiffened perceptibly and Grace knew that she had caught her daughter's attention.

"Even when you were a little girl I foresaw that I should have to tell you this; I couldn't let you awake to it by yourself as other girls might do. It's a curious inheritance I've passed on to you; whether it becomes a blessing or a curse depends upon yourself. I think if I had known its nature I might have been forearmed, and so you shall not go another day without being warned of your danger. They call this possession various names but it amounts to

attraction; it lies somewhere between the eyes and the mouth but it has its root in the heart. It explains why the boys hold you a little closer when they dance with you, why they squeeze your hand instead of relinquishing it at once; it explains why Douglas kissed you last night and tore your sleeve when you tried to prevent him. It's a natural quality. I think God gave it to every woman in the beginning so that she should fulfil the purpose for which she was created, so that it might lead to the selection of a mate, a husband, a father for her children; but as centuries passed some of us have lost the power to attract men; others have retained it intensified. You inherit it to a strong degree; it is nothing to be ashamed of if you do not abuse it, if you do not exert it capriciously. Every woman who has helped to make history has had this power of attraction but few of them have used it to hold one man fast through life. I want you to do that, darling; I want love to be supreme in your life—you will be so happy then. If you think it is Douglas, give him a chance, test him, and when you are sure save every bit of this magnetic force for him. Do you understand what I mean, Mildred?"

"Last night, Mother, when Douglas held me, when he whispered he was crazy about me, I was so ashamed and yet—when I knew he was going to kiss me I wanted him to—" The words came with an effort, but suddenly the barrier went down and two women looked fearlessly into each others' eyes.

"That was the first sign of selection toward any man?"

Mildred shook her head. "No, last summer Bert Emerson kissed me. I knew he wanted to and under my breath I dared him, but when he did I was sorry."

"And were you sorry when Douglas kissed you?"

"No, Mother."

"And Douglas is the first whose kiss hasn't repelled you?"

"Yes."

"You are both awfully young and yet

—darling, do you understand that if you are not going to marry Douglas you must not let him kiss you again?"

But at the word marriage Mildred buried her face in the pillows and Grace knew that she had said enough.

* * *

Martin telephoned at his usual hour.

"Where shall I meet you?" he asked.

"Come here for tea; I want to talk to you," she answered. As she turned from the telephone she met a dawning suspicion in Mildred's eyes, and she knew that the girl was speculating for the first time on the strength of the tie that bound Martin Douglas to her mother.

* * *

He came at five. Tea was served in the small boudoir, and Grace, in a wonderful tea gown of pale green chiffon and silver lace, was waiting for him.

"It's about your boy and my girl that I want to speak," she said as he raised her hand to his lips.

He was a tall, splendid looking man, somewhat gray but erect and full of vigor, the eagle type that conquers up to the end.

Douglas Armstrong was his **only** sister's child, and when the boy's parents had died Martin had taken him to live with him.

Now he merely raised his brows quizzically. "What has my boy been doing to your girl?"

"Nothing, it is what he may do. Shall we let them fall in love, Martin?"

"Can we prevent it?"

"Perhaps, now, before things have gone very far."

He was silent a moment, then he said in his most charming way, "In all essential respects he is my son; what would be more natural than that he should fall in love with your daughter?"

"Last night he kissed her; did he tell you?"

"A boy like Douglas doesn't tell such a thing."

"But he would if he meant to go on—as far as marriage."

"Yes, for I am more than his guardian; I am his friend."

Grace clasped her hands loosely in her lap. "I like Douglas," she said thoughtfully; "I think I could trust him with Mildred."

"And there is no girl I would rather see him turn to, but aren't you forcing matters; must we settle their futures so soon?"

She raised her eyes to his. "It means the end for us, Martin."

"Yes, I feared that."

"We couldn't go on, you realize it."

He got up and walked toward the window. "They are very young; if this is first love they'll get over it, and perhaps find someone they care more for—later—but you and I, Grace—we chose long ago—there can be no one else for us."

"Martin, if we consider ourselves now, knowing Mildred as I do, I am afraid that though she may get over caring for Douglas and marry some other man he may not hold her, and she may drift into compromise as I have done."

He came back and stood in front of her. "But Douglas may not be able to hold her either."

"I think he could—he is so much like you."

He smothered a groan. "And we must give up our happiness to make theirs possible?"

"And get what happiness we can out of that."

"But you can't live on memories. Grace, you are still a young woman."

"But I'm a mother."

"And what of me?"

"I can ask nothing, I can only hope."

He was silent a moment, then he spoke softly. "I adore you, in this hour when you ask me to let you go, I adore you, but I shall not try to hold you back. If Douglas comes to me and tells me he wants to marry Mildred I shall send him to you, and perhaps his love for her will be all the stronger, all the deeper because of mine for you, glorious woman that you are."

She held out her hand to him, and he drew her to her feet and into his arms.

They clung together wordlessly, for it was renunciation, and they knew it.

Then she sent him away, and she went upstairs again to her own room where Mildred still rested on the couch before the fireplace.

But now as the girl lifted her eyes to her mother's face they were misty with soft, shy happiness, and Grace saw that there was a box of flowers in her lap and a note in her hand.

"Douglas," she confessed, tremulously, "he's coming to see us, tonight."

"Yes," and then Grace bent over and touched her lips to her daughter's forehead, and as the soft arms stole around her neck and the soft cheek was pressed to hers she told herself that she was being repaid for having sent Martin away; that out of her conscious abnegation of power should be born a strength which would enable Mildred knowingly to weave the strands of a dangerous inheritance into a rope which should firmly bind the man she loved to her side for all time.



SAYS MIKHAÏL ARTSYBACHEV

EVERY woman craves admiration above all things, but she usually gives herself to the man who despises her a little.

Chastity is respectable only when it mirrors an absence of desire. If, having natural desires, you attempt to suppress them, then I say that your alleged chastity is a humbug.

Man's life is filled by a multitude of interests, but woman is only interested in herself. Her one overmastering object is to make herself more alluring.

Even the worst of men is ashamed to lie, but a woman lies with her whole being. She is never more tender, more caressing, more languorous, more charming than when she has just returned from the arms of another man.

Woman is most interesting when she is in love; man is most interesting when he is angry.



EVENING

By Martin Greif

DEEP blue in the valley;
Over the woodland the sun is sinking to rest;
In its last soft rays
The tree-tops reach their arms out to the gentle stars.



WHATEVER a woman genuinely wills, God discreetly agrees to.

JEALOUSY

By William Anderson

MY wife is too beautiful. I wish I had married a plainer woman, even one that was ugly. A beautiful woman calls for a hundred attentions that she considers her due. Used to suitors and men dancing attention on her before marriage, it is hard for her to settle down to mental faithfulness after marriage. I say "mental faithfulness" because I do not in the least accuse my wife of any other sort of unfaithfulness. Mad as I am, I know better than that. There never was a purer woman.

I met her first at college, if I may say "met" of two human beings whose paths diverged so widely. I was never much of a student. While on the campus my main achievements were organizing the laundry business and establishing a quick lunch to accommodate students. I did a big business at both. I came out of college rather discredibly as a scholar, but as a financier I had worked my way and cleaned up five thousand dollars besides.

In my third year my merits were suddenly discovered and I was rushed by a fraternity. After that I tried my hardest to join in with the social life of the school.

Laura, my wife, was the belle there. She was always surrounded by a storm of agitated youths, and I am afraid that I myself, on the outside of the group of besiegers, must have passed with very little notice.

One of our football boys committed suicide the last year in college. He was a hulky, blue-eyed youth, a law student. He spent the last night of his life reading Plato on the Immortality of the Soul, and then jumped head

first off the ledge of the tower at chapel time. The girls grew hysterical. Classes were closed for the day. The story was given out that the boy had gone mad through overwork. But an undercurrent of talk had it that he had killed himself for love of Laura.

Laura seemed to want admiration rather than love in those days, as she does still. When anyone pays her a compliment her eyes grow brighter, her features more radiant.

I got mighty little chance to talk to her or meet her when at college. Besides, though never gloomy, I am by nature a silent man and one little given to expression of emotion. I am made that way. I can't help it. I suppose we should never have married. And yet I love her. And I know that she loves me. And still this absurd jealousy grows and grows within me.

It was not till I had gone out into the world that Laura and I met on equal ground. The world is the place to test a man's qualities. One can bluff in school, but, at the final analysis, one cannot bluff in the world without producing some of the goods.

I came to New York and started up in business. From the start everything went well with me. I soon had a great office agreeably noisy with the flutter of paper and the click of typewriters.

One day, to my surprise, I ran into Laura on the street. I found that she had come to New York to go on the stage.

I invited her to lunch. She accepted the invitation. I soon persuaded her that the stage was not the place for her. It seemed that her family had suffered reverses.

I continued seeing her when I could spare time from my business. Then I gave her an easy job in my office.

I think the girl married me out of sheer desperation and a desire to have the things in life to which she had been accustomed, rather than through love for me, though constant association with me, and the one child that has come to us, has taught her to love and care for me.

Her tastes are utterly different from mine. She loves books and music and art, and, frankly, I own it as a want in my nature; these things bore me. But I am at home with myself when I am scheming and planning new business ventures.

Laura runs a salon and she always has strange men about the house whom I hate. Poets who flatter her. Artists who wish to paint her portrait, musicians, wild-eyed reformers, and founders of new cults and religions. But what else is the girl to do? And these people love to talk and so does she.

However, I resent the admiration the men show her. She is my wife, why don't they let her alone? Innocent? With a man, there is no such thing as an innocent flirtation. I know men, being one myself, and, if I were not so old-fashioned, so much in love with my wife—well—we'll let that pass.

Sometimes, here in my office, I get wild inside and I want to rise up and smash things and then run completely away from the whole business forever.

But one of the fellows who hangs out in my wife's salon says that even suicide solves no problems.

I am supposed to be successful. I am envied by many. No one alive is to be envied. All have their secret burdens, their private sorrows—and mine is a beautiful wife.

Last winter I found I could endure it no longer. I wanted to be with Laura. I had an uneasy sense of the fact that while I was at work she was going with people I didn't approve of. And to have one of those fellows kiss her hand—faugh, I don't believe she would let them do even that. But then

this mental unfaithfulness, this spiritual inclination, is just as bad. Perhaps one can be just as false in an inward thought as in an outward act. But how do I know what my wife thinks?

Last winter, I say, I found that I could stand it no longer. So I gave over the business into the hands of my manager and proposed a long trip through Europe.

Laura dragged me around to all the castles and monuments and literary sites. And each day I was irritated, not by her presence, but by the attitude of the men toward her. There was not one but cast his eye toward her. And this was done quite boldly in my very presence. It made me furious. They were all adroit enough not to give me a chance to thrash them. I hate the continental attitude toward women. Men even dared send her flowers. In Italy a count tried to make an assignation with her. Laughingly she handed me the card, the note, and the flowers he had sent her.

"Would you care to answer this for me, John?" she asked playfully. But I felt that, secretly, she liked it. I answered in a way the count should remember for the rest of his life. I blacked his eye. It took some trouble to suppress the scandal.

Laura's fault that all those men besiege her? No—it's her nature to attract men. Besides, she doesn't want what they want. All she desires is attention. She craves it every moment of the day.

At times I have noticed a look of torture in her eyes. It is so hard to have just friendship with men.

I get her all that money can buy. She tells me that she would much prefer to see more of me and have less. But does she? I am silent, undemonstrative, though God knows I love her! That is the pity of it. Besides this, there is a side to my nature that only life can satisfy, life and the business struggle.

My wife is too beautiful. I sometimes wish that I had married a plainer woman.

THE UPLIFTERS

By Jacque Morgan

THE guest from Pittsburgh stretched his arms and yawned with bored resignation. "A ripping time we're having, my boy, ripping! I like a good time, but—" Mr. Deister held up his hands in the manner tersely described by stage managers as business of expressing horror—"such orgies," he went on, "such bacchanalian songs, such ribald laughter!"

His host, little Percival Letcher, gazed helplessly around the big room for a possible source of entertainment; he saw only four aged dyspeptics who, hating themselves and each other, were seated in as many different corners of the room glaring at newspapers.

"Do they raise the devil like this all the time?" persisted Deister, with genial sarcasm.

Mr. Letcher sighed and tossed the stub of a monogrammed cigarette into a forty-dollar cuspidor. "Yes," he answered, "just like this."

Deister sprawled his big frame back into the huge leather chair and for a time contemplated the famous frescoed ceiling. Suddenly—thoughtlessly—he cleared his throat, whereat the four old gentlemen lowered their newspapers and stared at him long and cold and hard.

"Look," he whispered, "The old party with the white spats is getting ready to bite somebody. Let's sic him on the little fat one."

Mr. Letcher smiled faintly. "I'm afraid it's against the rules—members are only allowed to bite the servants."

Mr. Deister returned disappointedly to his contemplation of the famous frescoed ceiling.

"We might go to a show," suggested

Mr. Letcher, breaking a silence of some ten minutes.

"Shows—I'm tired of 'em. I've seen a dozen and they were all rotten. Can't you think of something else? Can't we have an adventure of some kind?"

Mr. Letcher shook his head sadly. "It seems to be closed season for adventures right now. There are no adventures—except in the moving pictures."

"Where's Pete Mason?" petulantly demanded Mr. Deister. "Pete always has ideas. *He'll* tell us what to do."

"Pete's quit us—married! And they say that he's a regular wife-lover, too," added Mr. Letcher bitterly. "He don't show up here once a month."

Mr. Deister frowned. "I always suspected there was something wrong with that fellow," he muttered.

They rose from their chairs and wandered into the deserted grillroom, where they drank an after-dinner cordial that neither wanted. And then as listlessly they wandered back again.

Faith in the ability of the incomparable Mr. Peter Mason to rescue them from a dull evening lingered with Mr. Deister. "I believe that if you could get Pete on the 'phone he would suggest something," he said, after some minutes of drumming his fingers upon the arm of his chair. "Suppose you try it."

Mr. Letcher, yawning, raised a feeble finger and a bellboy hastened to his side in a sort of a swift, noiseless glide.

"Get Mr. Peter Mason on the 'phone and tell him that I want to speak to him. If his wife answers, tell her that—that the Reverend James Deister, of Pittsburgh, wants him."

The youth bowed and vanished.

"Now in a minute," confidently predicted Mr. Deister, "we'll have a hot one. Pete is a wizard. He never fails. 'Member that time he took a burlesque company up to Fishkill when his aunt was putting on a show at the Methodist Church?"

Mr. Letcher grinned reminiscently. "Do I? I'll never forget it! And when Pete persuaded his aunt to let his friends go on as an added number, and they danced the peacock prance and sang 'Good-bye, Old Man Grouch'—well, she hasn't spoken to him since."

"Those were the good old days," sighed Mr. Deister, who was rapidly aging into the late twenties.

"Indeed they were," gloomily agreed his host.

One of the old gentlemen was now snoring painfully; the others were glaring at him with unspeakable venom.

As noiseless as a character in a moving picture the bellboy glided to Mr. Letcher's side and whispered, "Mr. Mason is on the 'phone, sir."

In the privacy of the telephone booth Mr. Letcher eased his mind.

"Say, Pete, this it Letcher. I'm at the club. Jim Deister is here and it's up to me to entertain him. Damn it! He wants to start something. I can't think of anything to do—I haven't an idea in my head. You can't come down, can you, and help me out?"

Mr. Peter Mason laughed boyishly. "How dare you make such a proposition to a perfectly respectable married man?" he demanded. "You wornout, sin-besotted rakes! How dare you!"

"Pete, for heaven sake suggest something—anything!" implored Mr. Letcher. "I've got to give Deister a sensation—a new one."

"Hand him a parachute and tell him to jump off the East River bridge," laughed the married man.

"Don't joke, Pete. I'm against it."

Mr. Mason pondered. "How about letting him do the Bowery in a dress suit. That used to be his stunt—"

"But he's cured of that," put in Letcher. "The last time he tried it he got his. It took three of them to do it,

but they certainly did a finished job. He was in the hospital a week."

Silence at Mr. Mason's end of the telephone evidenced that he was thinking. Mr. Letcher waited patiently.

"I'll look in the paper," ventured Mason at last, "and see what's doing. I'll call you up in ten minutes."

Mr. Letcher breathed a sigh of relief and hung up. The problem of Mr. Deister's entertainment was as good as solved.

"I got him," he announced triumphantly as he re-entered the reception-room. "He's going to call up as soon as he gets our program doped out."

Mr. Deister's face brightened. "Good!" he exclaimed. "Pete is the livest wire in New York. What the devil did he go and get married for? Let's get a drink." He slapped his friend upon the back and hurried him with good-natured violence into the grillroom.

Slowly Mr. Percival Letcher began to feel the insidious infection of Mr. James Deister's enthusiasm. "Tell you what I'll do," he said; "I'll agree to go through with whatever Pete suggests—if the very heavens fall!" And even as he spoke the fateful words he was astonished at his own daring.

They shook hands very solemnly, and Mr. Deister, suddenly remembering that he had a visitor's card, further pledged their covenant in a bottle of wine.

Although ten minutes was the allotted time for Mr. Mason to produce the plot, words and music for Mr. Deister's entertainment, less than half of that period had elapsed before Mr. Letcher was called to the telephone.

The inventor of revels was evidently excited. "Say," he said, "I've got a hot one. It's a peach. I wish I could go along, but the missus won't let me. She says—"

"But what is it?" breathlessly interrupted Mr. Letcher.

"Listen, nut: Get the evening paper and read the story about Mrs. Archibald Dutton-Dutt opening a 'spooning parlor' for working girls. It's an uplift thing—a place where the poor but hon-

est salesladies can meet brawny young sons of toil—object matrimony, and all that sort of rot."

"Well, what of it?"

"What of it!" hotly repeated Mr. Mason. "Why, you infernal idiot, go down there and propose to a lot of 'em, that's what of it! Of course, no girl with an atom of brains would accept you, but it might serve to amuse them. And spoon with all of 'em, you hear me, all of 'em. You haven't forgotten the holds, have you?—There's the Greco-Roman, the catch-as-catch-can, the collar and elbow, the—"

"I got you," put in Mr. Letcher. "We're to open a class in lovemaking—Professors Letcher and Deister—"

"Sure, that's it. Go down there and show those dub boiler-makers what real class is. Gee, I wish the missus would let me off!"

"And we'll go in for make-up and all that sort of thing," said Mr. Letcher excitedly. "We'll be laboring men."

"That's the idea. You can be an honest blacksmith or something," enthused Mr. Mason, and he grinned as he pictured the sparrow-legged Mr. Letcher posing as a Tubal Cain. "Deister can purport to be a man milliner. And be sure and tell me all about it in the morning."

Mr. Letcher promised.

Thirty seconds later the two adventurers were reading the story of Mrs. Dutton-Dutt's enterprise.

"SPOONING PARLOR" OPENS TONIGHT

**Mrs. Archibold Dutton-Dutt Throws
Open Social Hall of the Mary Higgs
Settlement House to the Working
Girls—Romance Subsidized**

Mrs. Dutton-Dutt's latest innovation in practical philanthropy will be inaugurated tonight when the parlors of the Mary Higgs Settlement House are thrown open to matrimonially inclined visitors. The experiment in subsidized

romance will be watched with great interest by philanthropic organizations the country over.

Mrs. Dutton-Dutt indignantly denied that she was establishing a "spooning parlor," when seen by a reporter this afternoon.

"The purpose of the Social Hall," she said, "is to provide for the working girls a place of amusement other than the dance halls, moving picture shows, and other doubtful amusements. Here, too, the young women can meet young men of their own station, and it is to be hoped that matrimony will be the result."

The reporter noted that the stage had been well set to accomplish Mrs. Dutton-Dutt's designs. Cosy divans were in the corners of the room, a number of large, red plush albums lay upon the center table, and the lighting effect was of that soft, subdued kind that makes men reckless in the presence of beautiful woman.

"It's an inspiration, that's what it is," solemnly declared Mr. Deister, and as he laid down the paper he touched the bell in the center of the table. "Pete Mason is a genius—a genius, I tell you."

Twenty minutes later they had stepped into Mr. Letcher's limousine and were speeding away for a Sixth avenue clothing store.

Celluloid collars, dinky bow ties—the made-up kind that fasten with a buckle at the back of the neck,—and low-crowned derbies of the "fried egg" variety worked wonders in their transformation. For the reasonable sum of \$1.15, Mr. Deister purchased a gaudy waistcoat that fitted his herculean torso like the skin of a sausage. A square-cut coat—the kind affected by dressy switchmen on a Sunday afternoon—edged with braid, and with sleeves that ended half-way between elbow and wrist, completed his costume.

Mr. Letcher outfitted himself in a corduroy coat, four sizes too large—a garment which Mr. Deister delightedly informed him looked like it had been thrown on him while running.

Much pleased with their disguises, they set out with great cheerfulness upon their adventure.

II

It is enough to know that Mrs. Archibold Dutton-Dutt was secretly known among her friends and relatives as "Teddy"—a sententious nickname that rather honored the exceedingly strenuous person in public life from whom it was taken. Although a widow and young—she was only thirty—she had no time for the frivolities of society; life held greater problems. And so it was that she calmly appropriated her brother's child, the motherless Helen Bascom, and ran her through Vassar with as cool and as an impersonal interest as a workman runs a board through a planing-mill. And so likewise it came about that when later the young woman emerged from the intellectual mill she was once again seized and plunged into settlement work.

For months Mrs. Dutton-Dutt had quietly been planning her scheme of wholesale matrimony. It was a project that lay very close to her heart. And now at last when her Social Hall was about to be thrown open for the quest of romance, the newspapers had facetiously dubbed it a "Spooning Parlor." Mrs. Dutton-Dutt was angry; she was very angry.

None is more sensitive to ridicule than the working class. And, as might be expected, a curious and grinning crowd congregated on the sidewalk outside of the settlement-house upon the night of the opening of the new enterprise; but it did not enter. The humorists of the press were responsible for another calamity: of the formidable array of "receiving ladies" who had promised faithfully to attend, Mrs. Archibold Dutton-Dutt and Miss Helen Bascom alone stuck by their colors.

"It's a shame, Aunt Margaret, that's what it is; a perfect shame."

The widow bit her lip but made no reply.

"And just look at all these flowers and decorations! Plague take the newspapers!"

"Helen, someone will come. I feel it intuitively. I am never mistaken. And when they *do* come we must ex-

tend ourselves to entertain them. We must make this first night a success if we only have one caller. Remember that."

They busied themselves in moving the vases from one table to another and with patting the sofa pillows and with arranging the curtains and straightening the portières—and then Mrs. Dutton-Dutt, suddenly looking up, was startled by the sight of two men who had entered the room and who stood by the door gazing at them with rapturous eyes. They were strange-looking men. Their clothes fitted them ill and yet, uncouth as they appeared, they seemed to be not without a certain ease of manner.

Mr. Deister chose the younger one at once. He had previously determined upon a conversational style simple and direct, frank and ingenuous. So he walked calmly over to Miss Bascom and uttered those three wonderful words which have for untold ages expressed man's regard for woman. He said: "I love you."

Mr. Letcher also made a frontal attack. He took Mrs. Dutton-Dutt's extended hand, squeezed it with great tenderness, and then, with faultless brevity, remarked, "I like you." He followed this subtle compliment with: "Will you marry me?—Please!"

Helen Bascom was staggered for the moment by the very warmth of Mr. Deister's declaration. She gasped helplessly and looked over to her aunt, who coolly signaled her to a corner of the room, and then, as though to indicate the young woman's procedure by her own, took Mr. Percival Letcher to a divan in the diagonal corner.

Once seated, the widow turned calmly to her companion and said, "Now, say that all over again."

Unhesitatingly Mr. Letcher repeated the formula: "I like you. Will you marry me? Please!"

Daring men had at various times proposed to the widow, but never in all her experience had she met with such a calm, and yet precipitous, suitor. It was, no doubt, the simple, unaffected

way of the working class. Always with a keen sense of humor, she had an almost overpowering desire to scream. But the visitor must not be offended. She hung her head, better to control her features, and pondered over her reply. It was a situation that required considerable diplomacy.

In the interim Mr. Letcher repressed a grin as he listened to Mr. Deister's rumbling bass. The Pittsburghian was painting a word-picture of the roseate future of the girl fortunate enough to marry a milliner. "I get seventy-five a month," he was saying, "and perquisites—hats and things."

But Mr. Letcher was not to enjoy his friend's discourse for long, for the widow nudged him into attention.

"You wish to marry? What is your vocation and your income, sir?"

"I am a humble blacksmith, madam, and my income is sixty thous—sixty dollars a month. I am also a horse-shoer," he added naively. "No more honorable pursuit exists. What is it that Longfellow wrote—

*"Under the spreading blacksmith tree
The village chestnut stands,
A mighty man is—"*

"No more poetry," interrupted the widow. "I abhor it."

Mr. Letcher subsided.

"What kind of a wife do you wish?" she inquired.

Mr. Letcher looked at her with infinite tenderness, with unspeakable longing. "One just like you," he breathed. And to this he added a sigh, deep, heartfelt, portentous—one intended to convey to her the tumult that raged within him.

Imperturbable as she usually was, Mrs. Dutton-Dutt wavered before this onslaught of admiration, and her eyes fell—only to gaze for the first time upon the faultlessly creased trousers that incased the Letcher legs and the twelve-dollar shoes on the Letcher feet. Instantly her active brain formed a solution of the mystery, and she rose, saying: "Pardon me just a moment. I

must speak to the other young lady."

She beckoned her niece to the center of the room and whispered in her ear: "*They are reporters!* We must not tell them that we are not working girls—we don't dare to now! Helen, if they should find out who we really are—such a story they would write!"

Miss Bascom, wide-eyed with apprehension, nodded and they resumed their seats.

"And you," said Mr. Letcher, "where do you work?"

"I am only a cloak model, sir," the widow replied, and she gave him a flash of turquoise eyes that made him sit erect in his chair. It was a real and decided thrill—the first one he had had for a long, long time.

"Say, what is your name?" he asked, with sudden interest.

"You may call me Margaret." She gazed into his eyes with just a suggestion of confusion. "And yours?"

"Percival," he returned, reddening. "But I really couldn't help it, you know."

"Percival—and a blacksmith," she mused.

"It is rather awkward, isn't it?" he offered.

"I hardly admire the name—Mike or John or Bill would have been better—but I suppose that I must not expect—everything. However," she looked at the clock, "the minister will be here at nine. We have ten minutes in which to get better acquainted."

Mr. Letcher moved uneasily. "It's rather short, don't you think?"

"You are not weakening?" she demanded coldly.

"I do like you tremendously, and perhaps—perhaps—" he floundered hopelessly.

Into Mr. Deister's attentive ears Helen Bascom poured a tale of astounding hardship. It affected him greatly. She told him of how she, an orphan, was compelled to work fifteen hours a day in a department store; how out of her miserable wage of but three dollars a week she had, by the simplest of living

and by the strictest of economy, been unable to provide the necessities of life for less than two ninety-five, leaving her but five cents to lay up against sickness and old age. She told him of her pathetic attempts to keep up her wardrobe; of her ingenuity in making one gown suffice for three; she led him through a maze of chiffon, broadcloth, lace, linings and trimmings which "you, as a milliner, understand"—he nodded with grave intelligence—of the one pathetic gown which, thanks to her marvelous dexterity, had enabled her to shift for every occasion. All of this she told with an easy mendacity that astonished her. Feeling much encouraged, she warmed to her work. She narrated the simple story of her sick roommate; of how, suffering with the last stages of consumption, the sick girl had been ordered by the doctor to the sunny climes of Italy or Algiers—"but there was no money—"

"My word," put in Mr. Deister with a suspicious huskiness in his voice, "that's tough!" He suddenly drew from his pocket a huge roll of bills and thrust them into the girl's hand. "Send her by all means."

She handed the money back with a saddened countenance. "It is too late."

"Too late?"

She nodded and stared moodily at the floor. "Yes. The girl—is dead."

Tears stood in Mr. Deister's eyes. "By Jove, that's affecting—very affecting," he said. "It's downright tough, I call it."

Miss Bascom sighed dismally. In a low, earnest voice she spoke of how she welcomed the opening of the Social Hall; of how it would take her and other working girls away from the uncertain pleasures of the dance hall; and then, with downcast eyes, she wistfully confessed to a hope that it would find for her "perhaps—perhaps—a home." She did very well indeed for a girl just out of school.

"And would you marry me—a milliner?" asked Mr. Deister tremulously.

She looked up at him with frank, ingenuous eyes—they were brown, misty

with tenderness, and as unsophisticated as those of a babe in arms. "I had hoped for a plumber," she said.

Although snow lay upon the ground outside, Mr. Letcher was perspiring freely. The widow played with him as a kitten plays with a mouse. At times she allowed him hope of escape—only to pounce upon him again with her soft conversational paws just as he saw his way to freedom. Under her skilful management he performed stunts—sat up, rolled over, jumped through, begged and played dead. But at last she began to tire of the sport.

"So you think our acquaintance too short to consider at this time anything serious—matrimony?"

"Well, I—"

"Then, as I understand it, you refuse my offer?"

"I should not like to put it that—"

"You are, then, not serious. Do you regard matrimony impossible as an institution—or is it me?"

"You? I should say not! I—"

"But you have just refused me—I might say 'jilted' me."

"My dear lady, you are quite mis—"

"Then why are you here? Can it be that you are a mere trifler?"

"Oh, indeed, no. I am—"

"You are," put in the widow, resolved to end the game, "a reporter. I knew it from the first. Now go ahead and write a funny story of this place. You need have no regard for facts—you never do. Make it as ludicrous as you please. It need not concern you that you are closing a charitable institution for poor working girls. Have no compunction whatever. Be as untruthful and as unfair as you like. But make it a good story!"

A white-capped maid interrupted for a moment to hand her a note that came with a box of flowers. The widow held the epistle in her hand and without reading it, continued:

"I should think that occasionally you reporters would have some slight regard for—"

"But," expostulated the unhappy Mr.

Letcher, "I am not a reporter, and I never purported to be."

"Then who *are* you?" demanded the widow, rising to her feet in angry astonishment.

"Please don't, my dear lady."

She stamped her foot. "Who are you?"

"Now—Margaret—"

"Don't Margaret me!"

He clumsily got out his case and handed her his card. She read the small engraved script in blank amazement, and then a great feeling of relief surged over her. Her fear of being held up to ridicule in the newspapers vanished, and with it her anger. She looked at the crestfallen Mr. Letcher and a most adorable dimple began to show upon her cheek. Her lips trembled and she bit them until they lost their cherry color and the skin showed white around the pearly teeth. But her efforts were vain; the humor of the situation was too apparent, and so she broke into a peal of laughter.

Mr. Letcher looked up hopefully. "You have heard of me?" he asked.

She nodded, vainly trying to control her mirth. In her paroxysm the note fell from her hand. He picked it up and as he handed it to her his eye fell

upon the superscription—"Mrs. Archibald Dutton-Dutt."

III

Mr. Letcher never remembered just how he got out. Afterward he had a dazed recollection of writing a check for a thousand dollars for the Social Hall fund, and of mumbling to Mrs. Dutton-Dutt his pleasure at meeting her.

On the sidewalk Mr. Deister shook him roughly by the shoulder. "Where's a flower store?" he demanded. "Quick!"

"I don't know," answered Mr. Letcher. "Why?"

"Why?" shot back the excited gentleman from Pittsburgh. "Why, I am going there and order two truck-loads of violets sent out to that poor little working girl. That's why!"

"I don't believe she is a working girl," began Mr. Letcher. "More likely she is—"

"I don't give a continental who she is," fiercely interrupted Mr. Deister. "I'm going to marry her—if she will have me."

As they got into the limousine Mr. Deister directed the chauffeur: "The nearest flower shop—on the high. Hurry!"



TRANSPOSITION

By H. Thompson Rich

HEART so closed, so cloyed with pain
 Garnered long ago;
 Heart as passionless as rain
 Falling slow,—

Heart, you opened with the May,
 Wide your gateways flinging:
 Pain poured out, and Love today
 Entered singing.



DEFINITION of philosophy: Pontius Pilate in Latin polysyllables.

GRANDMOTHER

By Helen Woljeska

THE girl came out of the sunny garden, the light of sunshine in her eyes, the perfume of flowers in her hair. The room she entered was hushed, and drowsy in green twilight.

The girl went across the dimly mirroring floor, to the broad, low mahogany bedstead. She bent down, towards the small, faded face that lay in ivory paleness among billows of white, lacy stuff. And she took the old woman's fragile fingers into her warm, firm white hand.

"How are you, Grandmother?" she asked softly.

The old woman stirred. Her face had a troubled look. Her sunken lips moved uneasily. And her tremulous fingers tried to press the granddaughter's hand. Then, with intense effort, her heavy tongue succeeded in forming a few words. "Archie . . ." the girl understood—"where is Archie . . . how . . ." the rest was lost in painful whimpering.

The girl felt a sudden, strange pang. "Archie" had been an uncle of hers, who had died before she was five. She well remembered his blond and slender beauty—more from his life-size portrait, probably, than from actual reminiscences. He had been Grandmother's youngest son, her favorite son. And now, after so many years, she inquired for him! The girl did not know what to say. . . .

Her Grandmother's eyes were centered upon her face in helpless appeal. "Archie? . . ." she whispered once more, almost inaudibly.

"Archie is very well . . ." the girl faltered, "and happy—"

Just then a breath of the summer breeze was wafted in through the open windows, and with it came the sound of clear, youthful voices from the garden—brother Tom and some boy and girl friends going to the tennis court.

The dim, tired eyes brightened up. "I hear . . ." said Grandmother. Then the heavy lids drooped again. The restless murmur of the faded lips peacefully died away.

The girl sat quite still.

She stroked the withered hand.

Is this what we all shall come to? Not only health, beauty, gayety—not only our body's perfections desert us! But our talents and faculties, our spirit and strength of will—they abandon us as well! What then are we? What is left, if neither body nor mind endures? What does endure? . . .

Ah, even before we die, we return into chaos. Where is the victorious power of our brain? We have to give up our personality even while we still breathe. Her Grandmother, for many years the brilliant center of a brilliant circle—and now a shrivelled, helpless heap of wretchedness—suffering in dumb, oppressed stupor. Ah, she could not be considered a woman any more. She was but a sexless, impersonal, half-conscious part of that big, sorrowful thing—humanity.

Then, suddenly, the girl remembered "Archie" . . .

Tears sprang to her eyes.

"Dear Grandmother," she whispered, "you still are a woman—for you still love."

She stroked the withered hand, very gently.

LITTLE GIRL

By Lee Pape

IT was one of those spring evenings when the air is heavy with a nameless, unbottleable perfume, and even the smallest stars are allowed out. One of those evenings when only the soulless can study. . . . Robins stood on a brightly lighted corner far from the dormitories and breathed deeply of it. His half-dreaming eyes viewed the countless strollers with friendly impartiality, his ears caught with intoxicating pleasantness the music from a dance hall across the way; athwart its high line of lighted windows couples zigzagged as though they were on skates. After a bit Robins raised his eyes to this endless procession of flitting silhouettes and held them there in a sort of fascination. He thought.

"That music's alive! I haven't been in one of those places since I was a freshman."

Slowly, without definite plan, he walked across the street and looked through the glass doors. Some girls grouped at the head of the long flight of stairs that led to the dance floor saw him down there and beckoned. Then, when he swung open the door and entered, the group broke up with shrill giggles, possibly of shyness, but Robins continued mounting the steps until he reached a square landing containing a stout woman smiling hospitably behind an oblong table, on which Robins laid a half dollar. The stout woman, still smiling, returned him fifteen cents and a blue checkroom ticket.

"Wardrobe to your left at the top of the stairs," she said through her smile.

Robins climbed the remaining thirty steps, found the "wardrobe"—a boy's

face squinting through a hole in the wall, and turned his attention to the dance floor. It was big and square, and, though the orchestra was half way through a one-step, girls of any age up to twenty were still sitting along the walls waiting to be asked to join the throng that flashed past their impatient feet. A cluster of youths, the undue length of whose coats betrayed that few of them were leaders of fashion, hung nervously about the doorway, afraid either of their own dancing or that of the untried expectant maidens.

The first girl that Robins danced with had seemed of a practicable size until, when he had got half way through asking her, she rose (as far as she could) and showed her duplicity. She was one of those deceptive sitters-down who are in reality the tiniest girls imaginable. The initiated, who generally remember to look before they leap, can tell them by their toes, which are always pointed down to give their feet the appearance of reaching to the floor. No tall fellow can dance with them and half enjoy it.

The second girl that Robins danced with was tall and impossibly blonde and reasonably smooth, but every time Robins tried to interpolate a swagger step there would be a complication of feet, and, instead of being properly overcome with guilt, she would inquire haughtily, "What are you tryin' to do?"

The third girl (the first two really haven't anything to do with the story) attracted Robins' attention by the detached way she was blowing a wisp of hair off her forehead—as though it were somebody else's forehead she was

blowing it off of, while her eyes gazed wide a million miles off into the future, or perhaps the past, which is also a million miles away. They were very light eyes, either gray or blue, depending on which was your favorite color, and the rest of her face was modeled with the most scrupulous attention to detail, from that wisp of hair on her forehead down to the little chin that made the turn of the oval. She was dressed in blue—dark blue, with a simplicity that can be made very expensive but which, with inborn expertness, may be approximately arrived at for, say, \$6.48.

She had, seemingly, heard his voice rather than his words; her eyes flew back to the present, and him. She nodded, not too impersonally, as the tall blonde girl had nodded. The orchestra was playing *Cecile*.

She performed the miracle of making the "lame duck" as floaty as a waltz. A miracle of miracles.

"How many more may I have?" demanded Robins while, after the encore, he was still gratefully applauding the unresponsive orchestra.

She looked up at him—continued, rather, to look up at him, from under half-lowered lashes. Then, with a sudden little parenthetical puff at the disobedient wisp, she handed him her dance card. There were several initials on it.

"How many more do you want?"

"All of them!" replied Robins promptly. He shoved the card in his pocket; they were partners for the rest of the evening. She followed as though he were using her mind to guide his feet. Her name was Jessie.

Between dances they talked. Her grammar was not all it might have been, but her voice, shade for shade, startled Robins into memories of a voice that had rippled low and confidently into his ear at the Junior Prom. He had been confident that he should never hear a voice like that again.

Her intimate friends, she let him know, called her Little Girl.

The owner of one set of initials managed to track them down in their secluded corner. He was a good-looking youth with very broad shoulders and an aggressive chin. She smiled pleasantly up into his glowering face.

"I'm sorry," she said, "but I've promised this dance."

"Yeh," he agreed grimly, "you promised it to me." And he stood planted there looking doggedly down. She smiled up at him even more pleasantly.

"No," she said gently, "I promised it to *this* gentleman."

He glared at that gentleman as though glaring was but a feeble substitute for what he really felt inclined to do to him. But, after opening his mouth to express himself further, he suddenly thought better of it and stalked away from Robins' bland counter stare.

"I've never did that before," she confessed. "It makes me feel—funny."

"It's done in the very best families," Robins assured her. "If you had red hair and freckles, now, or maybe a squint, it would never do for you to pull anything like that. But all good subjects know that the queen can do no wrong."

She gave him a demurely suspicious look.

"Are you trying to kid me?"

"Far be it. . . . They're playing *The Geranium Rag*."

After that, in a way, the place contained only themselves and the music. It was truly music that lived, riotously in the one-steps, tenderly in the hesitations; only five musicians, but they were young and their pulses beat to the same rhythm; the violin was king and the drumsticks knew their place. Perhaps it was the music that now and then, at the end of a waltz, surcharged Robins' arm so that it was only with a special effort that he could remove it from about his partner—an act of liberation that for a fraction of time seemed only to make the nestling Jessie a tighter prisoner.

There was a certain rare daintiness about her; a simple, artless tact that

spoke in the shades of her voice, even, somehow, in her movements.

He asked if he might see her home.

Outside on the pavement the youth with the aggressive chin was standing in a group of other young fellows. He glared fixedly at Robins out of hostile black eyes. Robins returned the look just as fixedly, and the subject who did not seem to understand that the queen could do no wrong snorted and looked elsewhere. In her cocky little black hat and mannishly swagger "balmacaan" topcoat, Jessie again demonstrated that taste and a slim pocketbook can be the best of friends.

"Isn't that place," Robins ventured as they walked, "rather dangerous for a girl to see much of—alone? I heard several 'parties' being arranged, and some of the boys, while they were getting their hats and coats, were—well, talking pretty loud about their plans."

She declared solemnly, "I've never been inside a café in my life. You don't believe that, do you?"

"Of course I believe it. Why shouldn't I?"

"Why—I only meant that most of the fellows I've met up here don't believe nothing I tell them, hardly, and they don't seem to be surprised if I don't believe nothing they tell me, either. It's true, just the same. I been invited to join their 'parties' plenty of times, but I've always turned them down. I been afraid. Not that I haven't felt like going, sometimes. I've heard so much about cafés—the kind that have cabaret shows. They must be wonderful! But I knew I couldn't go without drinking. I've never took a drink in my life. You don't believe that, do you? I mean, it's true, I haven't."

"'Cabaret show,'" said Robins after a pause, "is only the made-in-Paris name for the cheapest kind of singing and dancing—bum entertainment with French dressing. And if you don't drink, it won't seem 'wonderful.' It never gets wonderful till about the third round. It might be a good thing . . . Little Girl, do you think you could trust

me to show you the inside of your first café?"

"Oh! You mean—without drinking?"

"With the lid on tight."

Yes, she thought she could trust him—she knew she could. And she took a little tighter hold on his arm, sending an electric thrill through him. They got on a car, and off, and then there were two blocks to walk. Two dark, slumbrously echoing blocks with lights winking down them from the far end. They walked the second one rather slowly, and in the middle of it he turned and faced her, just, apparently, as she was stopping to look up at him, the hand that had been on his arm now fluttering about one of the top buttons of his overcoat. He placed both his hands on her shoulders, and she made a little sound and drew away, only to return close, and closer. And then he had her in his arms and was kissing her. . . .

In the darkness her light eyes, so near, seemed mysteriously dusky, almost black. And once again he was reminded, somehow, of the girl at the Junior Prom. . . . A dim palm corner instead of a dark street. And the sensation of it had not been so different from this. Yet *she* had been a "first family" girl. . . .

Jessie readjusted her hat to its original tilt and silently took his arm again, and they walked on.

The café was rather crowded. In front of a rattling piano on a narrow platform built along the wall, a youth with plastered-back hair was singing in nasal tenor. Robins selected an inconspicuous little corner table. A waiter hovered. Jessie bent mysteriously a little way across the table, and Robins leaned towards her inquiringly.

"How would it be," she whispered, "how would it be if I just ordered a drink and let it stand in front of me, like as if—as if—"

"As if—I see. What would you prefer to have—stand in front of you?"

"A—a Martini highball."

"Ain't no such animal. You mean cocktail."

"Do I? What's the difference?"

"A cocktail is short and stout, but it has a longer reach. And now about eats?"

"Why," Jessie hesitated, "I don't know. I—I can't think of nothing but lobster à la Newburg. I don't know what it is, but it's all I can think of."

"It's not a bad thought for a beginner," consoled Robins, and sent the waiter off. Up on the platform a girl with bold eyes and a bolder gown was shouting off key, while behind her, at the piano, a mere boy with long yellow hair managed to extract an incredible number of sounds per second.

"If I couldn't sing better'n that!" shuddered Jessie. The waiter returned with two yellow drinks and the lobster.

"It's not really so bad," explained Robins. "It's only that you can't get the fine points while that cocktail remains in the glass—where it's going to remain. Art owes a great debt to alcohol. I've known a little colored gin to rouse a really passionate appreciation of music in fellows who couldn't whistle Yankee Doodle so you'd be sure of it. But, I say, how can I keep my mind on anything so mild as gin while you're blowing at your hair like that?"

"It's a habit," she explained hurriedly. "It don't mean I'm not paying attention. I always do that when I'm listening hardest."

"I am flattered. Still, it would require terrible concentration for a fellow to think straight while it's going on. If clothes make the man, it's 'habits' that make the woman."

"Woman?"

"Little Girl. Some bally little 'habit,' like a trick of the voice, or that blessed blowing stunt of yours, is liable to keep a chap awake nights, while the size of a girl's mind, or the dimension of her soul might not worry him any more than the name of her dressmaker."

She regarded him steadily.

"Who is it has a 'trick of the voice'?"

In his unpreparedness for this naïve

uprearing of green eyes, he caught himself blushing.

"Oh, I don't know—nobody I know, especially. It was just an idea, merely—"

"That's all right. I just asked. *You* got a habit. You got a habit of twitching one corner of your mouth when you're going to say anything—funny like."

"Perhaps I just do it to let people know when they're expected to laugh."

"There—you did it then."

"Did I?"

And he did it again, while she laughed victoriously and sent upwards a joyous little puff that made the mutinous wisp sway triumphantly. And then they both laughed, and she said, "I like it, though. And I—I guess I know what you mean, because when I watch you doing it, it's—it's hard to keep my mind on what you're saying."

She suddenly dropped her eyes, and her face went a deeper pink than it owed to the shaded table lamp. Robins tingled all over and was silent because he was not sure that his voice would be steady. Oddly he felt almost as if, leaning to each other across the little table, they had kissed again. The high-pitched voice on the platform shrilled on, and stopped.

"Hear them clapping?" said Robins. Had she been deaf, she must have heard them. She raised her cocktail and for a still moment returned its wicked cat's eye stare.

"Do you mean," she said in a low voice, "that if I just drank only this one I'd really think that girl could sing?"

"I think one would do it. You see, cocktails are perfect mixers—it doesn't take 'em any time to get intimate with new acquaintances, though after you've known them a while they insist on introducing a few friends before they'll get really sociable. But that's the way the efficiency experts that run these places work it out—if they put lots of gin in the cocktails they can get a very expensive effect with very cheap singers."

Jessie put down her glass without taking her eyes from it.

"Good night!" she said.

"Then you're not so keen about your first dose of cabaret after all?"

"Are they all as bad as this?"

"Worse, some of them."

"Good night!"

"And you've no hankering after a second treatment?"

"With you?" She said it quickly, eagerly, and when, rather at a loss, he flushed and stammered a little, she added almost sullenly, "Oh, I know we won't never be seeing each other any more. You're a college boy. Ain't you?"

"College men, we'd rather hear it called. How did you know?"

"I can tell. To-morrow you'll go back to your books and the other rah, rah boys, and I'll go back to—to—"

"The store?"

"Yes, the store . . . and that'll be the end of it."

He looked thoughtfully down into his own untouched glass, and then troubledly, wistfully, back at her. Passionately he wanted to give denial, but all her double negatives, subtly-armed symbols of bewildering injustices, seemed suddenly to line up between them, each an affirmative of her hopeless creed.

"I'm afraid that's about the philosophy of it, Little Girl. We won't lie to each other, will we? And it's a rotten, rotten shame."

She gave back his gaze steadily, and into her eyes crept the oddest look, longing, bewilderment, fateful submission, before she answered gently:

"Oh, well, I ain't blaming *you* for anything, you know. It's a case of has-to-be, I guess. It ain't your fault. It ain't nobody's fault."

"It's *somebody's* fault!" Robins, striking the table with his flat hand, said it almost loudly. Then, his voice dropping almost to a husky whisper: "Little Girl, it *must* be somebody's fault. Not yours. Not mine, and I might keep specializing on sociology and ethics and all that printed wind

till I'm a hundred years old, and still not find out whose. And yet, in a way, you stand for all I like in a girl. . . ."

Her hand, raised just a little, stopped him. She was trying to smile; her lips were parted slightly. Suddenly she reached over and patted his hand, though he felt how her own fluttered.

"Don't," she said. He could scarcely hear her. "It's all right. I know."

For a passionate moment, in the dusky rose of the shaded light, their eyes met in silence; their eyes for a brooding moment annihilated that figurative space. Then the wisp of hair stirred as she sent it a determined little reminder that she was still Little Girl and no one else.

"Thank you for trying," she said, and her voice was suddenly back in control. "It was—very sweet of you, but I'm me and you're you and I know where I get off, I guess. And that's Markham's, to-morrow morning, at quarter to—"

"Markham's!" The word rang queerly. "Markham's! I might have known!" He laughed bitterly. "Oh, now, I say. That's rare! By all the laws of irony I ought to be John Markham's only son. Still, I'm his nephew—his adopted son, in a way; if it weren't for John Markham I'd probably be bucking the world for a living long ago. So the situation is as perfect as we have a right to hope for in this imperfect world, isn't it, Little Girl? Markham's! And you've been stifled so that . . . oh, come, let's get out. I must have some air with this!"

The yellow-haired boy was assaulting the piano apparently with intent to kill as they made their way out; its hysterical protests reached them, faintly, out on the street. Slowly they retraveled the two dim blocks to the trolleys.

"I'm sorry I began that about never meeting no more," she broke silence at length. "Everything's perfectly all right. Really. And I want you just

to put me on my car without coming along. I'm not ashamed of the street or nothing, but I'm used to going home alone, and it would be more—more—

"More perfect that way," he gravely finished for her. "Perhaps it would, Little Girl."

Far off a street car rumbled.

"And—you've showed me a most agreeable evening."

For the second time their lips found each other in the darkness of that sleeping street. The starlit silence enveloped them as in a protecting shield while he held her close, and she did not move until his arms loosened, and the rattle of her car was very near.



THE VICTORY

By R. C. Whitford

CRASHING his left beneath my guard, he smiled,
 Displaying as he smiled a broken tooth
 And bloody, jagged lip. I countered hard,
 Swinging my right full at his grinning mouth.
 Then as he tripped I slugged with all my strength
 And landed half an inch below his heart.
 I have seen cleaner knockouts. Now and then
 One man can lift another off his feet
 And send him sprawling cold. My man just wilted,
 And doubled, crumpled up. His groping arms
 Flung out to reach a saving clinch across
 My shoulders, but I sidestepped, breathing quick
 And almost gone myself. The big lights danced
 When I looked up. The faces of the crowd,
 All shouting now, were dim, but all the yells
 Tore through my aching head. And so I stood,
 My hands against the ropes and holding fast,
 While he was counted out. A Champion,
 My second led me staggering from the ring.



THE honeymoon lasts just as long as the bride believes the bridegroom's word of honor.



WHEN a man over 40 falls in love the Fool-Killer spits on his hands.



THE GREATEST PAINTER IN THE WORLD

By Lord Dunsany

THEY were speaking of art, two men in a railway-carriage.

"Perhaps Frans Hals was the greatest painter there has ever been," said one.

And a shy-looking man who had not spoken, sitting opposite to me, snorted contemptuously.

"No, no," said the other man. "Velasquez."

And again the little man snorted to himself.

This sincere contempt for two great names and the man's silence seemed to me to betoken an original mind; a mere ignoramus would have had much to say. And when the others got out I tried to talk to him.

"Raphael," I said, "was the greatest painter that there has ever been," not so much expressing an opinion of my own (for how can one compare painters?), but in order to hear his opinion.

And he only answered me: "No, no, not Raphael."

"Giorgione, perhaps," I said.

"O no, no," he said.

"Rubens," I said.

"Out of the question," he answered.

I like to get at a man's point of view, the mere statement of an opinion is nothing, and as yet I was puzzled.

"What is it you dislike about these men?" I asked.

"I don't dislike them," he said, "but to say that any of them is the greatest painter in the world is absurd."

And at last I got him to speak.

"What is wrong with all these men," he said, "is their limitations. Take a

Rubens," he said, "one can tell it at a glance from Frans Hals. I—I hardly like to say so, but even I could tell the difference myself. If Rubens could have painted a Velasquez and a few pictures of the Florentine school even, he might have been a great artist, but he couldn't; he could only paint one kind of picture which one can tell at a glance. Then look at Raphael. . . ."

"But surely every artist. . . ." I said.

"All these men have their limitations," he went on, "which stamps them as little men. Good enough in their own way but quite out of the running."

"And whom," I said, "do you consider the greatest artist that there has ever been?"

"Really," he said, "I think I would rather not say."

And the more I pressed the point the shyer he became, until I feared he would shut up altogether, and I had, as it were, to start all over again.

"Perhaps you paint a little yourself," I said.

"Yes," he said, "I paint."

"Then surely," I said, "you have a style of your own as every artist must."

"No," he said, "I don't think so. Nothing to recognize."

"But what kind of work do you do?" I said.

"I work for Sir Titian Tup," he said, "the Bond Street dealer."

"But what kind of picture?" I asked.

And then he pulled out of his pocket a printed form, a list of pictures sold that year by Sir Titian Tup.

"Twelve Raphaels," I read, "of the

later period when experience of the world's admitted sorrows had evidently ripened that artist's undoubted talents, technique warranted. One Giorgione, typical example of the work of that master. Two Michael Angelos, very artistic. Ten Velasquez, that really fashionable artist, possession of any of which may be said to render the fortunate buyer a social *sine qua non*. Six Titians, guaranteed, at once smart and instructive. Three Holbeins, highest grade quality. Forty-two Rubens; and so on and so on."

"Fetched an average," said my companion, "of twenty thousand pounds apiece."

"But what," I said, "have you to do with the pictures?"

"I paint them," he said. "I work for Sir Titian Tup."

I asked him how much money he got on each picture.

"They don't pay us by piecework there," he said. "I get ten shillings a day while I work for the firm, or I may keep my pictures for myself. That seemed fair but it soon taught me what my pictures were worth without the firm to back them. The public won't look at them if they're not signed by an old master, and the dealers wouldn't guarantee them; so I used to work for the firm. Down in a cellar I always had to work. It's easy enough to do an old

master by daylight, especially if you only paint one kind all your life like Rubens and the rest of them—but I'd like to see any of them do it by electric light, as I used to down in my cellar.

"When I had finished a picture it used to go upstairs to the frame department to be framed in real plaster; then on to the signature department; and after that it was ready for the market."

"You say you used to work," I said. "May I ask if you have given up doing so?"

"I got the sack," he blurted out. "I got the sack for coming in one night after ten o'clock. They said I was honest and industrious but they had the reputation of the firm to consider and they couldn't have their employees keeping late hours."

"But never mind," I said, "you can still paint your pictures."

"No, no," he said hopelessly, "all the dealers know why I got the sack, and when the public know that they'll have nothing to do with me."

This was some months ago, and only to-day I read in a daily paper of old masters going for £23-2-0, eight guineas, fifteen guineas, and thirty-three pounds twelve. I suspect that Sir Titian has had to fall back on the old kind and they don't fetch the same price.



A GREAT MAN

By Witter Bynner

PASSION transforms me from my puny build . . .
Your bosom listens to me like a crowded balcony
To a great man speaking.



AFTER all, women *can* keep secrets. Imagine them telling the truth about their husbands!

THE MAN WHO WAITED

By Lina S. Bernstein

OF course, in a colony such as ours we expect things to happen occasionally. Nor do we constitute ourselves into a court of special inquiry in which to rend the ones most directly concerned. It is really much more easy and comfortable to remain entirely unconscious of anything which people do not tell you of their own accord.

And we are not cynical either. I suppose this revelation will be a terrible blow to the eager students of that Bohemian life which is lived between the covers of certain really very well-advertised books. We seldom find it necessary to drop a subject to the accompaniment of tolerantly raised eyebrows. We don't take it up in the first place.

But there are the exceptions, of course. And the affair of Paul Kadison was decidedly one of them.

Kadison really did not belong among us at all. All the rest of us who painted or sang or wrote were never quite oblivious of the coy, elusive check which we expected to crown our efforts. But he had had a father who worked so long that he had died before he had found any time to spend. And I suppose it was for this reason that Kadison sold three pictures to the two of any other man who really needed the money.

He occupied the north studio on the top floor, the choice one, of course. There were two other rooms which went with it, and he had fitted them up in an easy way which made us gasp. He never waited months to pick up things as we did, perforce. He had a terrible off-hand knack of installing the very thing which one or the other of us

had been vainly looking forward to as the ultimate, hopeless dream of a lifetime. There was a certain rug, for instance, which I—but never mind that now.

On the same floor, tucked away in the most undesirable corner, Richard Moseby painted his canvases and cooked and ate such food as came in his way. He cooked it himself, that is to say, before Myra Haskell appeared on the scene. After that she did it—and remarkably well, too (I've sampled it pretty often myself)—and brushed his clothes, and mended away busily on his madras shirts, and saw to it that his hair was trimmed away from behind his ears with sufficient regularity. He had really a very satisfactory head.

Of course, what she was really there for was to pose. Moseby had caught a glimpse of her on one of his rambles in the outskirts as she was hanging out the wash in her father's little backyard. It wasn't long after that he got her to coming almost every day to his studio. Pretty soon she was doing his house-keeping after her hour on the dais. Probably her tidy eye couldn't stand the results of his own efforts. Then, rather late in the afternoon, she'd go home to get supper for her widowed father and the brood of little brothers and sisters.

She was a nice girl, and we all got to dropping in pretty regularly on Dick Moseby, especially when we knew that she was there. I remember one afternoon when Kadison had come in from his lordly grandeur across the hall, and little Riggs, the illustrator, was there, and one or two others. And a pretty tight squeeze we had of it, too, for the place was not what you'd call spacious.

L She was posing at the time, for the arms and bosom, I should judge, from what Dick was doing to his canvas. I don't know much about it myself, being only a scribbler, and I've never dared try to find out for fear I'd get to looking at things for their painting value and lose the flesh and blood perspective I need in my business. But she did make a wonderful picture sitting there. There was some dark, soft stuff thrown over the high-backed chair in which she was leaning. I go to dances quite often myself, and I've seen plenty of women in evening dress, but I've never seen anything to equal the line which started at her ear and ran with such powerful grace into her bare upper arm. The back of her head and the other arm were folded up in something black and filmy which fell down over her bust, and the way the flesh curved at you softly and richly and dimly through that veil was impressive, I can tell you.

Kadison was smoking and appraising her with his artist's eye. Have you ever seen that expression? It's impersonal and quite business-like. I suppose the slave dealers in the Oriental markets (if they are doing these things any more) look up and down the line in just that way.

"Will it bother you, Moseby, if I talk?" he asked.

"Eh, what's that?" Moseby started as if from a dream. I suppose he'd forgotten that we were in the room. "Oh, certainly, go right ahead; you can't disturb me."

"Do you like this work?" he asked, and we saw it was Myra he wanted to talk to.

Somehow the question struck me as rather an odd one, though I really couldn't say why.

Maybe it made the same impression on her, for she didn't answer for quite a bit. She looked at Kadison quite steadily out of her big eyes, unexpectedly blue behind their thick, tangling black lashes.

"Work?" she echoed. "Do you mean sitting here like this for Dick?"

She was looking at the busy painter

as she said his name, and it was as if a light had been ticked on behind those eyes of hers. Moseby happened to raise his head just then and I caught the look that passed between them. Some of the paint on his brush dripped down into a corner of the canvas.

I think Kadison noticed it, too, for I saw him turning his gaze from her to Dick through the smoke of his cigar.

"Work is what you get paid for, isn't it?" resumed the girl rather unexpectedly. "Then this isn't work I'm doing."

You see she made no secret of it at all.

"But would you do it for somebody else—for pay? Me, for instance." Kadison was slowly blowing smoke rings in the air.

We all straightened a little in our chairs. Even Dick looked up and opened his mouth as if to say something, but he shut it again and fixed his eyes on Myra.

The girl was looking at Kadison, and I think that just then she caught the glint of a big stone he wore on his finger. (He liked such things.) Perhaps involuntarily she turned her gaze to her own strong, bare, rather roughened hands lying in her lap.

"No," she said slowly, "I don't think I shall ever pose for anyone but Dick."

Somehow I felt as if a hovering tension had relaxed. I think we all caught our breaths slightly.

It was Myra who broke the short silence.

"Dick," she said, "get up and look to the potatoes. I think I smell something burning."

* * *

In the light of all this and other scenes, I can't pretend to explain what happened. The girl was rather impenetrable, to be sure, but I did think that she made her feeling for Dick pretty plain. The great question which I asked myself after I found out was how in the name of all that's inexplicable did Kadison get her to do it? I have never gotten the answer satisfactorily settled in my mind to this day. Nor have I ever found a clue to the

other puzzle, which is why did he do it at all? What was there in it for him? For I was as absolutely sure that he never really loved her as I was that Moseby did. Of course, the fact that the other man had her and plainly needed her may have raised her value in his eyes.

What we all noticed first was that Myra began to skip days. A little later it was weeks. And then she stopped coming altogether. That was just about the time when Kadison locked up his studio and said good-bye to us. He said he was going on a trip. He wasn't quite sure whether it would be the Great Lakes or San Francisco by way of the Canal. Although it wasn't really open to traffic yet, he had a notion he could slide through because he had a friend on one of the government boats, he explained.

It's a good deal to our credit, I think, that it never occurred to us to connect the two happenings. Of course, we missed Myra because, as I told you before, she was a nice girl and we all liked her a good deal. We got to noticing Dick, too, just then. He'd never been a very communicative chap, and he said very little when we pestered him with questions about the girl, as we did at first. But pretty soon the change in him was so plain that we didn't do it any more. A lock of his front hair that I'd caught her playing with once turned white all of a sudden. Staring there on his dark head it gave him rather a wild look. And as time passed we wouldn't find him working as we used to when we'd drop into his studio. Perhaps it was because he got a queer uncertainty or tremble in his hands just about that time. I saw the knife slip once and cut pretty deeply into his finger when he was scraping a palette.

There was a large picture he had of her which he placed conspicuously so that it faced you when you entered the room. It used to make me jump at first when I came in. It was the one in which she sat leaning back in the high-backed chair with her throat and

shoulder sharply bare against the background and the rest of her glimmering mysteriously through its transparent black drapery. He had caught the look in the eyes which she used to have for him.

What with his nervous twitch and whatever else ailed him, he wasn't doing much work and, of course, selling still less. If it hadn't been for an evening art class he had I really don't know what would have happened to him. But he always refused to sell that picture. I know personally of one or two advantageous offers he had. I suppose he was too fond of staring at it for that. Many a time I've seen him lose himself looking at it in the midst of a conversation, and when you caught his eye it would be quite blank.

And then one evening she came back.

As it happened, I was visiting him that night. I had stepped in at the provision store at the corner and bought the half of a roast duck. I had a notion that a sandwich or two wouldn't hurt him and I'd brought the animal along with me to his room and dumped it on his little table as naturally as I could. Luckily I found him in an easy mood and in a little while we were sitting comfortably with a sandwich in one hand and a hot cup of tea in the other. I remember he was just setting it to his lips, when the door opened without a tap and she stood there very still. I had just time to notice his eyes rounding over the edge of the cup when she took two short steps into the room and fell straight forward with her chin to the floor. Maybe you've seen a tree felled in the woods. Well, she came down like that, as if she hadn't a joint in her anywhere.

A good deal more quickly than I'm telling it I jumped to her and lifted her shoulders. I had a distinct impression of sharp bones through her thin dress and even in the midst of my other feelings this gave me a shock of surprise, for she had never been one of your slender ones. I had some difficulty trying to lift her on to Dick's cot.

I suppose in my hurry I had taken hold of her awkwardly. Then it occurred to me to wonder why he wasn't helping me, and I looked up at him.

He was standing with his legs braced far apart and his arms hanging straight down. In one hand he still held the cup and the last of the tea was spilling down on the floor. For the minute he was as motionless as a statue of himself might have been.

"Confound it, man, why don't you help me get her on the bed?" I called to him roughly to wake him up.

He came to life at that with a sort of wrench, and lifted her feet. In a second we had her on her back on the bed and I was trying to take off her hat and open her collar.

"Get some water," I cried to him impatiently, as I saw him still standing there, staring at her stupidly.

I wetted a handkerchief and passed it over her forehead and eyes. The lids were closed over them so tight that they fell into little wrinkles. Her lips looked blue and pinched and there was a bruise on her chin where it had struck the floor. But her cheeks were bright red and felt hot to the touch.

In a couple of minutes her eyes opened and looked straight at Dick, who happened to be standing in her line of vision. She sat up with a jerk.

"Dick," she said in quite a natural voice, "it's growing late. You'd better put the kettle on to boil."

So we knew that she was wandering.

I forgot to ask Dick afterwards what the doctor called it. But it doesn't matter much for she only lasted three days.

He borrowed the money to bury her with from me. He had never asked me for any before.

Several of us wanted to attend the funeral. But he said no, he had rather go alone. Not that he wasn't grateful, he added.

Through the windows of one of the front rooms we watched them take her away. We were careful not to let him see us but it wouldn't have made any difference in any case for he never once

raised his eyes from the pavement as he made his way to a coach that was waiting there. Even from where we stood the white lock on his head was rather startling.

We all got to watching him more or less after that. Not that we were definitely afraid of his doing anything desperate. And as it turned out, he didn't. In fact, he did nothing at all. I didn't see him touch a brush for months. He took to smoking his tobacco in a pipe. It had been cigarettes before, which he had been in the habit of rolling himself. But I suppose his hands shook too much now to make that very easy.

One thing that surprised me was that he took to coming into my room. He'd sit and smoke his cheap tobacco for hours, saying very little. I'm not exactly what you'd call inquisitive, but many a time I felt tempted to take him by the shoulders and shake some information out of him. For I knew very well that there was something queer behind the girl's leaving and sudden reappearance and death. And as I'd watch him sitting there with his miserable knowledge shut up inside of him I confess that I got to feeling viciously curious. Not that I wasn't sorry for him, too.

But it was one afternoon in his own quarters that he finally told me. The picture was still there in the same position. It had stood there all the time she was dying. I couldn't face it very comfortably myself, but Dick would hardly ever take his eyes from it.

"She was with Kadison all the time, you know," he said unexpectedly, after a long silence.

My mouth opened so suddenly that my cigar fell onto my hand and scorched it a bit.

"Yes, he got her to go away with him," went on Dick, not looking at me. "They traveled around awhile and then they came back. They lived quite near, within a mile of here."

I was going to exclaim, but I looked at him and decided I wouldn't. He was staring at the picture and he'd caught

the corner of his lip with his pipe, and was biting on it hard.

"I knew it all the time because she wrote telling me. But I didn't know he'd left her until she came here. He offered her money and she took some. She was afraid to go back to her father, you see."

I sat very still.

"She talked to me, lying here before she went, and that's how I know. She caught the first cold wandering around in the parks, brooding. And when she felt she had to have help she came here."

There was a long, long silence after that.

"I suppose you fellows didn't know it, but we had always intended to get married as soon as I could afford it."

Looking at him I had a strong inclination to break into language, hectic, relieving language. And I should have enjoyed having Kadison comfortably near, too. I said not one word, however. I was going when I saw he was going to speak again.

"He doesn't know that I know. She never told him she wrote me."

As I left the room he was staring at her picture, and there was almost a look of pleasure on his face.

* * *

You'll sit and speculate about men, and you'll lay out a plan for them to follow under a given set of circumstances. It will be the only sane, reasonable course and you won't let their feet deviate from it a hair's breadth. And then actually they'll do the one wildly improbable thing you never considered at all. At that you'd probably act the same way yourself.

So when Kadison came back and reopened his studio, which he'd paid the rent on all this time, I was pretty well knocked flat, as we used to say in our college days. I did a good deal of thinking about it one way and another, but I couldn't explain it satisfactorily to myself. Judging by my own standards, which aren't very broad, I guess, but which are the only ones I can afford to go by, it was not a healthy place for

him. In his position I would have put as much room as possible between myself and that north studio on the top floor. Not that it wasn't really a wonderful place to work in.

It was the thought of what Dick would do that really upset me, of course. There couldn't be any doubt that he was in a state. But as it happened, fortunately, he was away at the time. It was I who had managed it really. I had gotten my people up in East Elmsford to write asking him to visit them there for a while. I had been thinking that a little absence from that picture would do him good. And a hard enough time I had tearing him from it, I can tell you.

And now Kadison had arrived, and Dick, I hoped, was fishing himself into normality again up in the woods. But this couldn't last forever, and I confess that I lived in a constant cold bath of apprehension for some time. I got to imagining just what I would do if I were Dick. And quite a number of things flashed on me, too. But they had never just the action that the circumstances called for, I thought. But, of course, this is Dick's story I'm telling, not mine.

The very queerest development of all, however, I've still to tell. I said, didn't I, that Paul Kadison had come back and established himself once more in his quarters, with the hangings and the Chen-Lung vases, and the two etchings by Zorn and the tiled bathroom in the corner. But that wasn't all of it. What I really should have said was that *Mr. and Mrs. Kadison* took possession of the commodious studio apartment. For Kadison had acquired a wife!

I felt mighty helpless, I can tell you. Somehow it seemed that everything depended on me. I thought of going straight to Kadison and warning him to leave. But something kept me back from that. I couldn't quite bring myself to face him.

It occurred to me, too, to wire Dick to keep away. But how could I make such an action plausible? It would probably bring him home post-haste. In

my less responsible moments I even felt that it was not for me to interfere, since Dick was entitled to his come back. But then the wife! She complicated things. On the whole, the thought of that wife was comforting. Her presence made one thing plain enough, though; Kadison felt himself absolutely safe; he must have been quite sure that he had covered up all his traces.

And in the midst of my hesitations and perplexities Dick came back.

I observed him that evening rather narrowly as he sat silently smoking his awful tobacco in my room. It was about a month since I had seen him, and I didn't know in what shape he was to get the news I had for him. For I didn't want him to stumble on it accidentally.

Well, his outing hadn't done much for him, that was plain. Looking at him you felt that it was something pretty deep that had gotten out of gear. I could see that my remedy had not been the right one. I might as well have expected to cure a sick watch with a new crystal when it was the mainspring that wanted overhauling.

"Dick—" I began. I knew just what I wanted to say but I couldn't get it out very easily.

He turned his quiet face to me.

"Something has happened, Dick, since you went away. Somebody you know has come back here. To stay, Dick."

An impulse made me get up and put my back against the door, but I might have spared myself the effort. He only stared at me in a deadened sort of way and I saw the word "Kadison" form silently on his lips.

"Yes, he's back and—and he's married, Dick! His wife is living here with him!"

It was out! I leaned against the door rather spent, I confess. But I gabbled on to the silent figure.

"You can't do a thing, a thing! It's no use your planning anything! There's the wife!"

"A wife!" he repeated rather softly. Then again with sudden eagerness, "a

wife! Kadison's wife. Do you know if he's in love with her?"

I stared at him. I didn't know what he was driving at. But he didn't seem to expect any answer to his queer question. He was whispering to himself.

"He doesn't know I know," I caught in an odd, chuckling tone; "a wife! Some one he cares for!" There was a smile settling about his mouth, a smile of pleasure. And it wasn't pleasant to see.

I was rather frightened. I had a sudden, startling fear that the miserable business had gone to his brain. But I had no time to indulge it for at this instant there came a knock at the door.

Even Dick started at that. As for me, I jumped around as if the tap had been on my spine. But, hang it all, I couldn't do less than open the door, could I? Nor could I prevent Kadison—for it was he—from entering.

Upset as I was, I saw in a minute that there was a change in him. A sort of expanding, of throwing open of long-closed doors, if I may put it that way. His very step was freer. But in an instant the step was jarred out of its rhythm, almost as if he had stumbled over some physical obstacle. He had caught sight of Dick.

I wonder where he had expected to come on him for the first time. Not at this precise moment, I judged. But he had schooled himself well.

"Moseby!" he cried in a new, rich, glad voice. "I'm mighty glad to see you again, old fellow!" He seized his hand.

I was tensely prepared for anything. Unconsciously I braced myself for a shock, a clamor, an outcry.

"Back again, old man?" said Dick's voice quietly. Yes, he even shook the hand.

I sat down rather limp. I really don't remember how I responded to Kadison's greeting.

It was plain that he had come in to stay some time. He made himself comfortable with a cigar. Dick took one, too. As for me, I was oppressed by a womanish sensation of something very

like dizziness. It was Dick who did most of the responding to Kadison's talk, for the latter certainly spread himself in the course of the next hour. And I suppose you'll hardly believe me when I tell you that his subject was his wife. There are many things I never expect to understand about this case, and Kadison's choice of a topic of conversation on this particular occasion is one of them. I've often wondered whether it was bravado or just nervousness.

"She's staying with her mother for the day, doing some shopping," he said. "I'm anxious to have you all meet her. She's such a little young thing! So untouched!"

The curiousness of the situation was that I seemed to be imagining it all. As if in a dream I saw Dick smile acquiescently.

"Not that she isn't intelligent," the husband was maundering on. "Her aloofness is conscious. It isn't just childish ignorance. She's so white and clean! I bathe in it!"

So Kadison was capable of this enshrinement, this idealization! I felt a sort of pity for him as I looked at Dick's smiling face.

"That's what it is," concluded Kadison after much, much talk, preparing to go, "it's the feeling sure of some one, *sure*. No doubts or suspicions. Just safe and calm and *sure*. Like a child with its mother."

"Yes," said Dick, in a musing way, "sure."

"By the way," remarked Kadison, already at the door, "what became of—what was her name now?—Myra, that's it, Myra Haskell? Beautiful, inarticulate creature, as I remember her."

Really it was admiration I felt just then, nothing else; admiration for the exalted hardihood of the ravisher who felt so safe; for the bereft man who gave no sign. Dick looked the other frankly in the face.

"Myra Haskell?" he repeated. "What brought her to your mind just now? Maybe you remember that I was rather gone on her once. But I've lost sight

of her quite a while now. She's probably married."

Up to that point it hadn't occurred to me that Kadison might have heard of the girl's death from somebody else in the house. I now looked at him with quick apprehension. But no. I needn't have feared. It was perfectly plain that he didn't know. After all the thing had ceased to be a sensation among us by now, and the fellows were not the kind to tell a thing for the mere gossip in it. Besides, nobody but myself had any reason to connect him with the story in any way.

Of course, there was always the chance that he might find out. But, as I know now, he never did.

We all met Kadison's wife before long. Kadison saw to that. It was open house with him as soon as they were pretty well settled. But his samovar and his hospitality wouldn't have enticed me there if it hadn't been for Dick. For Dick took to spending an absurd number of evenings in the Kadison ménage, and I went along to keep my uninvited guardian eye on him. I was all at sea, for he never opened his mouth for my enlightenment any more. But if it was watching he needed he got it.

I won't pretend, either, that I was sorry for the opportunity to meet Mrs. Kadison.

What had I expected, I wonder? What sort of woman does a man of Kadison's class succumb to when he does fall honestly in love?

Well, there was a word he had used in describing her to us which expressed her well, I thought, as I looked into her calm eyes. Aloofness, he had said. That was it, the aloofness of a white, hard statue. The immobility of one, too. The features were irritatingly perfect, in the Greek sense. I often got to watching her profile with a sort of exasperation. There is a certain statue of Minerva in the Museum which affects me the same way. I never see it but I have to restrain a desire to tip it over, and send that half-sneering, self-

sufficient look of perfection into a beautiful smash.

But she didn't affect Dick at all this way, it seemed. He even began making up to her in a clumsy sort of way. He'd let her catch him in the act of looking at her admiringly. He cultivated her a good deal and I guess she appreciated it in her stony way. He had things his own way, too, because the rest of us didn't bother about her much, though, of course, we were polite.

And all the time I was growing more scared. I couldn't make out his game, and I put in a lot of rather distracted hours speculating about it, quite often during the night, too, when I should have been asleep. You'll ask me why I didn't keep out of it altogether? Why was I letting something that wasn't my business play the deuce with my nerves this way? Well, I'll have to leave the explanation to you.

Anyway I was worried at last into cornering him and asking a downright question.

"What are you up to, Dick? You're surely not trying to serve him out as—"

The face he turned to me was placid, and he made no reply.

"Besides, it's impossible. She'll never do it. She's not the kind. She knows on which side her bread is buttered. I've watched her, I tell you. She's fond of him, too, as much as she can be of anyone."

My flood of arguments seemed only to amuse him. A smile came to his yellow face.

"And the picture? Does it stand for nothing any more?"

I hadn't intended to be brutal, but his unresponsiveness was jarring me out of my control. But I'd touched the raw at last, I felt. A sort of rigidity settled on him.

"The picture?" he echoed slowly; "you remember when you used to tease me to sell it? Well, it's sold."

I started from my chair.

"You sold the picture!"

I couldn't go on. I certainly had urged him, and yet now it was done it seemed a dreadful desecration.

"Yes. The fool dealer gave me two thousand for it, too."

He started to lift himself from the chair. I noticed he helped himself up by the arm.

"Well, I guess I'll be dropping into Kadison's now. I've sort of promised to show the Mrs. that old portfolio of sketches."

I sprang up in a sort of rage with him.

"Dick, mind what you're about! Kadison is beginning to watch!"

A haggard gleam of something like pleasure became visible on his face.

"Do you think he notices? But then he's so sure of her. You remember him telling us that, don't you? He's always been the man to know where he stands."

He was in the midst of a chuckle when a kind of spasm or contraction twisted his face and he staggered stiffly backward against the wall.

"Dick, what is it?" I jumped toward him, frightened.

But he had already recovered himself.

"Only that you can stop worrying about me, old chap," he said. He was in a chair by now and I saw big drops on his forehead. "I've been told I won't last long enough to get into mischief."

I suppose my face told him what a state his words had put me into. For the first time that I could remember he made a voluntary movement of friendship. He laid his hand on my shoulder as I stood leaning over him.

"Yes, old fellow, the tube is about squeezed dry," he said slowly, with pauses between the words; "they're going to turn the canvas to the wall before long."

I shall never forget the month that followed. It wasn't only the misery of it, watching Dick as he shrank up and dried out, giving in without a struggle to the hand that kept closing tighter and tighter on his flickering little shred of life. I could bear that even if the pity of it did wrench me pretty severely sometimes. But a rage grew up in me

at the futility of his spoiled life, his stolen happiness. And when Kadison came in to see him, as he did several times, this rage of mine swelled up in me so that I had to hold a tight rein. But I couldn't have done anything anyway, for his wife was always with him.

Even to the last Dick did not forget to single her out weakly with his notice, and she was invariably touched and softened. I can't say the same for her husband. He stole looks at the helpless man which told me that things would certainly have come to conclusions between them if Dick had lived long enough.

The Kadisons attended the pitiful little ceremony with the rest of us, and I remember that she showed a surprising amount of emotion and cried many tears into a lace handkerchief without in the least reddening her beautiful straight nose. Kadison also gave some signs of upheaval, though I can imagine that his feelings at the time were mixed.

But Mrs. Kadison was destined to do considerable more crying shortly. For the most curious phase of the matter developed within a few days.

I remember I was peacefully smoking in my room, and thinking in a hazy kind of way that the Great Obliterator had settled poor Dick's affair far more satisfactorily than he could have done it himself, when my door burst open—yes, burst is the word—and Kadison, pale, rumpled, the whites of his eyes visible all around the pupils, stumbled in. He held some kind of paper in his hand, which he thrust almost into my face as I jumped with the shock of him.

"What—what does this mean?" The words came from him half strangled.

Even in the midst of my surprise I stared at him curiously. A man stripped of all his traditional disguises is always an interesting sight.

"He's left her money! Left her his miserable, beggarly two thousand dollars! He's left money to my wife, I tell you!"

Really for the moment I didn't understand.

"You knew Dick Moseby! You were his friend! You've got to tell me why he did it or—or—"

I became aware that I was being shaken by the shoulders. His staring eyes were close to mine.

I was something of a wrestler in my college days, and I shook him off easily enough and dumped him in a chair. But the turmoil in my mind was settling. I was beginning to see a light.

"Now," I said to him sternly, "stop raving and tell me quietly what it's all about."

But he was muttering miserably to himself with his chin on his collar.

"I might have known. Why didn't I kick him out when I saw him wriggling round her? Under my very eyes! And she, the smooth white devil!"

I was reading the will, a copy of the original probably. It was a sufficiently legal-looking document. Dick had taken no chances. He had gotten a lawyer to do it for him.

"—to my beloved friend, Mrs. Dorothea Kadison, wife of the well-known artist, Paul Kadison, I leave all I am possessed of, a deposit of two thousand dollars, in the Chemical National Bank, in gratitude for the many acts of affection she showed me during the last months of my life."

So that was his idea, was it? I was struck with the ingeniousness of it.

Kadison was shouting violently at me again.

"Tell me what it means! I'll swear you know! Look at the position this places me in! I loved that woman, I tell you!"

His voice cracked in the effort. After a minute he began to plead.

"If you know anything, for God's sake, man, tell me! I can't bear the suspense, the uncertainty! I've got to know, I tell you! I've got to be sure!"

There it was again. He wanted to be sure.

All at once he became unnaturally

quiet. He looked at me with eyes narrowed by suspicion.

"Was it that matter of Myra Haskell?" he asked.

I own I felt a little throb of joy. After all, why shouldn't he carry that about with him for all time? But I only stared at him stupidly.

"Myra Haskell?"

"No, no, what am I saying? I didn't mean that." He waved the memory away with his hand. "But can't you tell me—do you know if there is anything behind this bequest to my wife? Can't you say something to give me some relief? I've got to find out, do you hear? I won't be kept in the dark! She only pours tears out of those eyes of hers. But who can believe a woman?"

I had a swift vision of her with all the inflexible contours softened by these tears.

I suppose Kadison was relieved by his outburst in my room, but not because of any information he got out of me. After all, what could I tell him? I may have had my theory, but why should I attempt to defeat Dick's object, the only monument the poor fellow left behind him? Besides I was always convinced that he was entitled to his bite.

Kadison's parting "I shall never know" was sufficiently mournful.

You'll say I might have considered the woman. But, hang it, why?

She's with her mother, I hear, and Kadison has given up his studio for good.



APRIL SONG

By Marjorie L. C. Pickthall

WHEN the swart cherry showed
 Silvered and sweet,
 When all the April road
 Sang for our feet,
 Eve of the undershaw,
 Dawn of the scar,
 Was it her face I saw,
 Was it a star?

When the rose-seeking bee
 Sipped the young shower
 From the gray guelder-tree
 And the gold flower,
 Shaken leaf-loveliness,
 Shadows apart,
 Was it her lips said yes,
 Was it my heart?



THE original efficiency expert: Simon Legree.



THE chief argument against prohibition is that it doesn't prohibit. This is also the chief argument in favor of it.

FLIRT

By Thomas Ransford

ESTHER had left her machine and stepped up close to the barrier. She liked to be in the midst of this medley of life—cosmopolitan, metropolitan and rural, plutocratic and proletarian—attracted to the village by the county fair.

To her left stood a pretty girl in stiffly starched white "overskirt" and small, cherry-covered hat. She was with a very young man. And the two leaned close to each other and whispered and laughed and had the best of times. "Love's first sweet dream. . . ." Esther heaved a wistful sigh.

She turned to her right. There stood two who unmistakably were a married couple. He fat and florid. She frail and faded. She wore a suit of imitation pongee with a broad collar of imitation guipure "received as payment for many weary months of patient housework and other services—" commented Esther indignantly. With curled-up lip she watched the two. The woman held a bag of sweets. One after another her worn, docile hand with its heavy, dull wedding ring unwrapped small cubes of sticky pink popcorn—and one after another, with astonishing rapidity, these disappeared in her husband's loose, wide, smacking mouth. It seemed as a symbol of the woman's whole life. . . . "Behold the ideal wife—a cross between the cook and the courtesan!" Esther felt little shivers of disgust running down her spine.

She changed her position, decided now to give her whole attention to the horses—so much more attractive than humans . . . when suddenly she felt an intent gaze upon her. For a moment her lids remained lowered. Then she quickly looked up. And her eyes met a pair of keen gray eyes that held hers without wavering, in a per-

emptory fashion. Finally the long black lashes swept down again and a faint blush rose to her olive cheek. "Impertinent!" she thought, strangely divided between resentment and a stimulative pleasure.

The man who owned the long gray eyes was tall and well made. His face, attractive in spite of being rather brutal . . . "perhaps on account of it," thought Esther, relishing her cynical mood. And her pretty, curved nostrils, dilating, breathed with satisfaction the subtly blended fragrance of Perique, Eau de Cologne and Old Scotch that hovered about him.

The man had come in a stylish trap. His horse was a beautiful bay, with intelligent, gentle face. Esther patted its soft nose which was quite close to her—the man just then having stepped back to the trap. Now he returned with a blanket which he draped about his horse's back and neck, almost tenderly, as though he were dressing a beloved woman . . . the blanket had broad stripes of a rich, deep, unusual blue. Just the color of his tie. Now he pulled off one of his light leather gloves, and on his brown, nervous, well-shaped hand she noticed a ring, a large, oddly-carved ring, of that same wonderful color. "A blue Malachite!" Esther gave a little gasp of surprise. Her own favorite stone! Of course, she was not superstitious, still—this *was* a coincidence!

The man now stepped up close to his horse's head. Esther at once became much interested in her program. Her dark eyes were riveted on the book. But her ears were quite disengaged. They heard all the caressing words the man whispered . . . to her? Ridiculous! To his horse, of course.

Esther's olive cheek grew very red.

That man was positively absurd. He talked to his horse as he might to his mistress. . . . Still she must admit that he would make an adorable lover. What quaint terms of endearment he used—how flexible his voice in its low throaty cadence. Esther turned a little more towards him, just so he could see the outline of her cheek with the tiniest suggestion of a smile lurking on its very edge. She did not mean this as an encouragement. But somehow the idiot took it as one. His fingers, twisted into Daisy's mane, disengaged themselves with a jerk. Rudely he pushed the horse's head backwards, out of his way—and eagerly, with smiling eyes, tipping his head, he bent towards Esther.

But Esther stood transfixed.

In a flash all the charm had gone. She was conscious only of the brutality with which he suddenly had pushed aside his horse, as soon as his interest had been attracted elsewhere. The savage! Was not this as a vision of how some day he might push away his sweetheart—push away herself, should she ever have been fool enough to love him? . . . Indignantly she drew herself up to her full height. Her black eyes blazed. And, with the imposing mien of an angry empress she turned her back upon the man of the long, gray eyes, the odd, blue ring, and the subtly blended perfume. . . .

"The horses aren't particularly interesting to-day," she wearily remarked to her chauffeur. "Take me home by the shortest way, John."



LOVE'S PILGRIMAGE

By Scudder Middleton

LOVE goes out to the world's bright beauty
 Seeking a crown for her glowing hair,
 Wrought in the gold of her deepest dreaming,
 Jewelled with the lights that are burning there.

Love goes out to the world's high music
 Seeking a song for her lips to sing,
 Tuned to the lilt of her heart's rapt measure,
 Timed to the beat of her snow-white wing.

Love goes out on her futile questing
 Roaming the ways where the world is young;
 Love goes far and her heart grows weary
 Seeking the crown and the song unsung.

Love comes back from the great world's wonder
 Finding them both where she passed them by—
 Crown of gold on a child's sweet forehead,
 Song of her heart in a child's low cry.



REMORSE: regret that one can't do it again.

THE DESERT IS NOT FIFTH AVENUE

By Marshall Hugh Irish

AS all my co-murderers either are dead or, like myself, so old that they could scarce outlast an indictment and modern trial, I can see no need of further withholding this story. Not that its telling is like to serve any greater end than my release from that faintly dogging tug which I have for years felt hanging tenaciously on the extreme margin of the skirts of my conscience. It is vexatious to have a story keep saying, even in a faint voice, "tell me, tell me," as tirelessly as a worrying puppy pulls at your clothes. Moreover, you will find the thing interesting, chiefly, if your spectacles are at all like mine, in the revealing glimpse it gives of civilized men in the guise of Papuans at the torture test.

Perhaps I might hang back, even at this late day, from the tale's telling, were it not that I haven't Jim's fate on my conscience in quite the same weight as have some of the others. I found that out at the reunion last year: a reunion of four doddering graybeards, with letters from three others who were too feeble to come. *She* was not there, though, nor had we any word of her. I could learn nothing from the others as to whether she was living or dead, or of her past welfare or whereabouts beyond a few months immediately following the event. All knowledge of her had been swallowed up in that vast and changing flux of "the days of gold." But, highly as I prize each of my few remaining years, I would give at least one of them, probably more if cunningly tempted, to know what she thinks of the affair now, if she is living, or, if dead, whether her fleshless arms are outstretched in

death toward the gleaming Escalante desert.

* * *

I remember being distinctly impressed when I heard that Camilla (the name means "attendant at a sacrifice," my bookish granddaughter tells me) was to join our party. That her husband should pick up and go was in itself much as though the Indian in front of Nelson's tobacco shop had dropped his hatchet and begun packing a provision box. Edmunds was a less striking figure than the Indian; but he had sold beans and sugar and calico in Mohr's store so long that he seemed as static as the image. But that his wife should go with him! *Hein!* It was just equivalent to seeing the dress-maker's model next door step out and join the carven redman at his packing.

Camilla had not quite the model's perfect features and marvelous complexion, though she was far lovelier. I think I must have likened her to the lay figure just now because of her placidity. She *was* statuesque. I had a fancy, though, that as a Galatea she had her limits. But it is a sure thing that Edmunds did not need to take her with him to hold her fealty. I am certain, absolutely, that he might have left her in—any years, and returned to find her as unchanged as the model—and almost as unmoved by his return. Her sister, for example, as like as a twin, lived out a life as smooth as the flow of oil on glass. It recalls the buried latencies in Gray's "Elegy"; or was like two sensitized plates, one placed in a camera, the other in a forgotten drawer.

I was, as I have said, not a little

shaken when I heard she was to go. Camilla, to me, meant the goddess at the village church organ, against a background of stained glass and Palestinian maps. I had seen her thus from her fifteenth to her thirty-first year. It was this that had brought about her marriage to Edmunds. Here and there, society is divided into groups so small that a clannish member is limited in the choice of a mate to a very few individuals, or even, conceivably, to one. So it was in Camilla's church. Virtually, Edmunds comprised the list of eligibles. His voice had made him chorister, and that, with Camilla as organist, supplied propinquity. Church services, Sunday school picnics and the like threw them together, and, little by little, Circumstance herded them gently, almost unconsciously, toward the gate of wedlock's corral. Shaw is quite right: it is stupid to confuse love and marriage.

* * *

The start of a journey is bound to stand out in memory, regardless of its relative insignificance. The village street, with its square-fronted buildings, was thinly lined with friends waving adieus that early April morning, and a knot of people had gathered at the corner where Camilla climbed up beside her husband to the seat in front of the arched awning. She was the only woman in the party, and theirs the only living-wagon in the train. All the others were provision wagons. Some of us were horseback.

I know now that Camilla had no adequate conception of what she was going into. She had never been thirty miles from — except when she and her husband had gone to St. Louis on their wedding trip.

Jim was there—in the departing caravan, I mean—on his wiry roan, though neither she nor I knew him at that time. We might have heard his name. Our party was made up from three neighboring towns, of people well or slightly known to each other, except four strangers who had come on with one wagon from the eastern part of

the state. Jim was of these. He didn't long remain a stranger.

We were to take on ox teams at Omaha, where we sold such horses as were not needed. Two years had passed since a small millrace had set in motion a great man-race, and ours was far from a pioneer among the gold-drawn columns. Our passage was an uneventful one, as such passages went, save an occasional alarm and loss of time when our guide lost the trail and led us astray. So I feel no call to go into the details of one hundred and seventy-eight days that were much alike. You can read all that in history. You may not accept this as history, though it is.

Since our actions are almost wholly a continuation of our past, I have wondered what we would do should the entire race suddenly suffer a complete loss of memory. Camilla found herself in some such dilemma. She had no precedents. Not a single tenet of the old life fit the new. They simply could not be applied.

For a few days she kept timidly to her canvas bower, whether aghast at the necessity of formulating a new social code or engaged in that task, I can only guess. Evidently she had the good sense to see that she could not make the six months' journey, with all its revealing situations and inevitable intimacies, holding the men at arm's length with an incongruous reserve at which every snail-paced mile laughed in derision; and to stay mewed up in the mussy van was as appalling as it was absurd. She must have done the first constructive thinking of her life in those few days. It doesn't come easy for a woman to make precedents, though they are the devil for following them, once they are made. Her problem was to fit the niceties and exclusions of village life to a plains caravan, a thing that can not be done. She must have seen this, and, coolly throwing away her card-index of deportment, struck boldly out along new lines.

There is something subtle in the desert, something that bends everything to

its mood and circumstance—everything, that is, that it does not override as a high sea a reef. The strange alchemy of the rude wilds seemed to have transmuted Camilla in those few days, fitted her to its mold and uses. The change in her was next to uncanny: the plant and flower grown suddenly from the seed under the fakir's cloth. She adopted us. That is the easiest way to put it. There was no hesitation—she must have done all that in the van—no waiting for introductions; promptly as any man of the party happened to come near, she threw herself on him, figuratively, in a way that left no room for further offishness.

If the full weight of her metamorphose fell on me, it was because I had known her well. It never touched some of the party, and I think her husband had sensed its aroma in the brewing. But to me, who had seen her go into the van a village prude and come out of it a gracious cosmopolite, the effect was as startling as though a mute had stepped into a room and emerged from it speaking fluently. You might go into the room and look about foolishly, knowing all the while that it contained no explanation of the miracle. It was Gray again: the resurrection of another potential.

If she had been unconsciously seeking romance she had found it. A woman's penchant for that sort of thing ought to be satisfied with seventeen lovers—there were eighteen men in the party. For that matter, I am not sure that her husband did not fall in love with her, too. I believe he did, but was too stupid or stubborn to enter the lists. In her new guise, he had the same delightful lure that the rest of us had: a strange woman. But while she had changed, he had not—apparently, he scorned to do so—and neither Cupid nor Eros will drive single very far.

Seventeen very respectful lovers we were: the Sir Walter Raleigh walk-on-my-vest type. She was more to us than mere object of adoration. She was the impersonal woman, worshiped

of all men. I know now that other thoughts than mine were of her, other dreams than mine were dreamt. Our faces turned ever toward her, as bees to queen. She was our ikon: our Crusader's cross.

It was Jim's youth that opened to him Fate's gate. I have been thrown back on that conviction a thousand times. They were as complementary a pair physically as the eugenists could have found in all the earth, with the aid of a search bureau: blue eyes a-gaze into black; light curling hair against the raven's wing; musical tenor a-thrill to that deep contralto drawl that survives the grave; youth's upstanding promise and maturity's ripe fulfilment—it was all there, all the first-fruit perfection of the sacrificial offering.

Can't you see how it was, without my telling? He was the boy of the camp: the indulged favorite, welcome in every group. We all wanted him. I should say that he was one to whom puberty had come late; anyhow, at twenty-two his fidelity to the razor was a legitimate camp joke. "Jim, you need another shave," some one would say, playfully choking the smooth throat lolling across his leg. And Jim, blushing faintly, would grin good-naturedly, or perhaps wallow the offender in mock punishment. But I have seen a pensive look in Jim's eyes over nothing else, I think, than just his want of beard. Which shows what a boy he was.

It was one of those revealing moments that come stealing on us like a premonition that forced on me my discovery. On a warm and rather dark night I was lolling with my head on my saddle, Jim beside me, faced the other way. We often talked thus, at bedtime, and dozed. It occurred to me, after a lazy silence, that the boy's latest answers had seemed distraught. You know how these subtle intuitions envelop one suddenly. You simply *feel* that something is happening. I turned my head quietly and looked at Jim. Even in the darkness, I could see that his face was gray and profoundly set. His pose and tenseness was exactly that

of a lioness I had once seen gazing rigidly across a crowded tent toward her caged and roaring mate.

I sat up, in feigned unconcern, and looked toward the wagons. In the dim light I could barely make out the Edmunds van, which was nearest. There was nothing to be seen, absolutely; and Jim was no Peeping Tom. But through the soft darkness came the low murmur of voices—of her voice!

I needed no interpreter. The situation was intelligible to me—very—and I had just enough dull ache of my own to keep me on the alert thereafter. We are all hypocrites. The man doesn't live—though he may be unburied—who, placed as I was, would have turned his back on the incident and forgotten it.

To see your shadow in starlight, you have to know it is there. Even then it's a hit-and-miss affair. This passion that had thrust itself on my notice was a very ethereal thing: a thing of uncertain glances, of hidden hand-clasps, of rare—oh, very rare—and brief moments, sufficient for no more, I should think, than a hurried kiss or an embrace *en passant*, in the night-shadows of the camp. It was something that had to be sensed by the imagination, in part, something that one unaware must have missed. I know how easy it is to fool one's self in such a case; but I fancied that I alone knew the secret.

Their concealment, however questionable, scarcely arose to the rank of duplicity. It wasn't even low-bred. It was just as involuntary as a mannerism, and as naïve and graceful as the creep of grouse through bending grasses. You will at once want to know just how far this affair went. All I can say is that—whatever I thought at the time—I now believe that the amour was innocent, that is to say, as innocent as a married person's flirtation may be. We all concurred in that at the reunion. Camilla was a thoroughly nice woman, and well nigh a Puritan to boot. I should say that all the initiative was Jim's, and that the thing had begun playfully enough. He

had a boy's *entree* to her presence, and the winning impudence of youth; while she was not less a novice in such matters than he. One may believe that, having missed love in her youth, she found the strange cup the more tempting for its delay; but the Thou Shalt Nots could never be other than sheer cliffs to Camilla Edmunds. How sinister that we should see all this so clearly now, who were blind with suspicion, and with—shall I say?—jealousy, then.

As for Jim, there was no rent in the net for him. Youth threw him into it, and youth's qualities kept him there. At twenty-two a man who has led a clean life worships womankind *en bloc*. If there is but one woman, he concentrates on her his adoration of the sex. You will have to go to some one else for the reason why youth often turns to maturity in love. It's true, and there's no burden of proof on me. But the lure exquisite for Jim must have been her reciprocation. A woman's favor is, in any circumstances, the sweetest song life sings to man; but when she is the only woman, and he one of many men! I don't think Tanner, with all his perceptions, realized that the superman eventually got him on this very strand.

If I hesitate at this point in the narrative, it is because I feel that what I have now to tell may give you a wrong impression: that an incognizant viewpoint may lend to the merely inevitable, a cast of low-mindedness. The desert is not Fifth Avenue. You may, or may not, do in Rome as do the Romans; in the desert you will do as you must. Every fact, circumstance and action is thrown flat on the bare boards of necessity, and life narrows to a simple and direct contact with the meager materials you have been able to drag with you. Compulsion absolves sordidness. Indecorum tucks her maculate hand under the coat-sleeve of constraint.

It was the Wasatch Mountains that finally laid the victim on the block: that is, if mountains cause so-called mountain fever, which I doubt. At any rate, the thing lies at the door of

some subtle element in the air, water or temperatures of the Wasatch region. We had passed the Mormon country, and were skirting the foothills of the ranges far to the southwest of Salt Lake. Three of our men had had the fever lightly, one of them being unable to keep his horse a part of the time. He had ridden in the van for one day, cared for by Mrs. Edmunds.

It was a tribute to their rectitude that the ruse had never before occurred to Jim nor to Camilla. Distinctly it came from without—and to Jim. Of that I am convinced, and there is a faint, a very faint, breath of remission in it. I am prepared to swear that Jim *was* sick; that he had been sick all that day that Shelton rode in the van. He had stared at the wagon with something of the look I had seen on his face that night on the Nebraska plain. But the fever he had was not mountain fever.

So he took to the wagon, and all the elements of the strange rite came hurtling forward like wolves to the cornered stag. It was as though the lumbering van had been drawn heavily half across a continent as a baited trap.

It was a well-set stage. The shimmering desert stretched away to bronze mountains that lay on the horizon like recumbent monsters looking sleepily on. The *ensemble* was a study in baldness. Even the hour was bald: eight o'clock in the morning, the most literal, to my mind, of the twenty-four. Bald and naked and unrelieved was the incident of provocation, and baldly direct our response. The huddled cattle and the grimy wagons, even the faces of the men, had a bleak look in the mesa's white light, and in the east the bald sun glared its merciless expose. All the desert's essence was there, its enfolding grasp, conditioning as Arctic snows or the sea's spume.

Edmunds never told us what he saw when he pushed aside the front flap of the van. He took refuge in a sacred silence. Which gives me to say that jealousy, along with its other fell qualities, hath a devilish cunning. A lie of that kind is ever more effective than

asseveration, and we saw what he had not. That is what I think—now. What he saw was doubtless enough; but no more, I should guess, than I had seen rarely.

Camilla kept to the van, stricken dumb, apparently, with shame, and Jim, sitting apart, his eyes on the ground in boyish abasement, was not much better. His sullen shake of the head when I questioned him was certainly as opaque as the gray wall of the van, back of which she lay prostrate before her offended god, Propriety. Neither of them would talk, or, to be exact, Jim would not; and she volunteered nothing. Nor could any of us muster sufficient contempt for custom's sacred interdiction to question her, though I trust you will believe that we would have done so had we realized the enormity of what we were about to do.

I have never been able to give the thing a seeming, even to myself. Salem's aberration was not unique. Strange deeds in strange places has become a platitude, but platitudes have a reputation of their own. As I see it now, it was all a fanaticism, a violated taboo. These and desert blindness. There is no perspective in the desert, none, that is, for ideas. Every concept stands out sans context and utterly alone, as a picture thrown on a screen. You exclude all else from your mind in a frenzy like that of mad desire. We had brought into the desert a code alien to it, and that our decree should be as ill-fitting was all of a piece with the rest. The profanation of our holy of holies must be avenged, and the tablet of the wronged husband pointed the way. Edmunds, fantastically, became our *causa supremus*. And he had turned vindictive. The enhancement of a threatened possession is a truism, and the saurian anger of the aroused apathist ought to be another.

Virtually Edmunds passed the sentence. That he would have demanded the boy's life, without the flicker of an eyelid, I thoroughly believe, had he not felt that we would never follow him to such a length. Instead he decreed that

Jim must leave the party, and a sedative sophistry ushered our acquiescence to this; it looked so like what would have been justice in other circumstances, though God knows we had seen bones enough along the way to know better. Since he could not go on—we had but one guide—he must be left behind. If he died the desert was answerable. Reassuringly we passed this Pilate's basin.

I held out for a week's rations. Edmunds had contended for a single day's supply. I was seconded by Wilkins, from Jim's own town, and we gained our point. We backed the boy, too, in his demand for a farewell word to Camilla, accompanying him to near the van as sureties.

I know the Escalante never saw another such scene. It was like a burial service: Back of us the group of gray-faced men, before us the van's soiled hood, from which the woman's low, half-suppressed sobs came quivering out on the pitiless waste. You know the great passion never approaches the brink of death's precipice. There is a zone of dissolution in which it cannot live, and on the verge of which it falls back, giving place to other emotions. It may lie dormant, awaiting a mis-carriage of death; but there are no Groves of Daphne on the banks of the Styx. I am positive that Camilla's agony in that hour was solely that of a tortured mother: of a mother who must slay her child. Wilkins, who, stood beside me, his eyes fixed unseeing on a hub of the wagon, had known the boy's mother and sisters. I heard the same thing in the woman's voice that I saw in the man's eyes.

I stayed with Jim until the caravan was a crawling thing on the horizon. He was still dumb; but he gripped my hand at parting—gripped and clung to it an instant, his eyes on the sands. Then I rode away from that boyish figure astride the wiry roan, rode away toward a death-white face a-stare from the van's black opening. And all the weight of the thing's folly, and uselessness, and insensate bigotry fell on me in that passage between the two victims. How stolidly the accursed wagons reeled the windings of the hellish trail! The act was none of theirs, and their chucking wheels reiterated the disclaimer. Disavowal was in the brown mountains and the blazing sky, and the stare of the stupid desert seemed freighted with a dull regret.

It was not until the next spring that we learned Jim's fate—those of us who happened to be there at the time—when his saddle, watch and purse were brought into the diggings by a party of Missourians. We said nothing publicly, but a great deal to each other privately. We had thought the boy would try to make his way back to Salt Lake. Instead he had ridden around us, and lost his way. He had died ahead of us, we concurred, but slightly off the trail.

I have always been glad that the Edmunds had gone on to other fields before the arrival of the Missourians. Uncertainty could scarcely have been worse for Camilla than our certainty. She had her prayers. I have seen their fervor many a night, after Escalante, in the still face that peered tensely into the starlit desert from the rear of the van.



IT is when a woman has nothing to do that she always does her worst.



WITHOUT a doubt there are women who would vote intelligently. There are also men who knit socks beautifully.

THE TWELFTH JUROR

By Scammon Lockwood

IF we followed the roots of the affair back beyond their apparent terminations, we would find that nothing has a beginning; and if we traced its consequences we would see that all things are without end. Yet somewhere the roots and the clinging vine of consequence must be cut or torn from native soil and tower, tucked up and sent forth in the orderly flower-pot guise of a complete history—which, by-the-way, is something that simply doesn't exist. And so, since we cannot begin at the beginning, let us begin where it seems best.

A man and a woman alighted from a southbound Fifth Avenue 'bus and walked west in Fortieth Street. They appeared like people of some consequence. Their clothing was not only of the current mode but clearly well made and expensive, and their manner was that of those fortunate beings who are accustomed to command much service from others.

But an observer of even a little perspicacity would have suspected that there was something illicit in their companionship. To be sure there were none of the guarded yet obvious turnings and cranings of the neck by which the motion picture hero or villain registers the fact that he is being followed. These two strolled along very quietly and glanced neither to the right nor the left. And yet a keen observer would have felt that they did not want to be seen.

But the shrewdest, unless he happened to know these two, would never have suspected the explosive truth, which was that the woman was Mrs.

Frederick Ames, society leader and wife of much of the real estate to the east of the Avenue; that the man was Cyrus Lloyd, rising young artist; that they had spent the morning together in Central Park, where Lloyd had gone ostensibly to get a sketch of a peacock, and that she was now coming with him alone to his studio.

And now another root of this history must be momentarily traced. One day several months before, Cyrus Lloyd was seated before his easel, gloomily contemplating the drawing on which he had been working. It showed a young girl in a dancing frock, and the artist had been trying for an hour to get an unconventional and attractive pose for the figure that would at the same time please the advertising manager by showing off the points of the dress to his satisfaction. Lloyd did fashion work almost entirely, although he loathed it and this job was particularly distasteful. Still, it brought the bread and the butter and the candy of life and must be put through. His model, as though taking her cue from her employer, was listless and quite unsatisfactory. Outside it had been snowing quietly, steadily for hours. Lloyd felt as if he would welcome any sort of an interruption.

And as he had noticed frequently that things sometimes happened in answer to his mood, he was not surprised a moment later when a hesitating, apologetic knock came faintly to his ears, muffled by the crimson velvet portieres that hid the door and entire north wall of the studio.

"Come in?" he called, and then re-

membering that the latch was on, he parted the draperies and opened the door.

An odd figure confronted him, a man so short as almost to appear dwarfish, enveloped in an old and threadbare overcoat and crowned with a battered derby whose dents and worn trimmings were plainly visible in spite of the coating of snow which still clung to it. The man wore a sharply pointed Van Dyke beard in which was a plentiful sprinkling of gray hair, and his moustache curved upward in a truly fierce Prussian manner. But his most remarkable features were the eyes, so huge as almost to appear deformed and deeply luminous like those of a lunatic or at best a monomaniac. And it soon developed that the man did have a mania for one thing.

"My name is Stanislaus Stoltsgard," he said, pushing himself into the middle of the room without waiting to be asked; "Mr. Hatterman told me you said you wanted to learn French. I taught him in six months and I can do the same if not perhaps better for you."

The artist was interested at once. Hatterman was the owner of a department store for whom Lloyd did work and had spoken of this French teacher.

"All right, Etta; we won't do any more today, same time tomorrow," said Lloyd, and the model, glad of the release, went into the other room to change into her street dress. "Won't you sit down, Mr. —, Mr. —"

"Stoltsgard," said the visitor. "Stanislaus Stoltsgard; I am not French, I am Polish. I always tell the truth. But I could teach French or German or Russian or Spanish or Italian better as a native."

"Who else have you taught?" asked Lloyd, going as he spoke to a cellarette which stood at one end of the piano. He had noticed that the man's ungloved hands were blue with cold and that he was shivering from head to foot.

"Doctor Jenkin White, Mrs. Fred-

erick Ames," began Stoltsgard and then, observing the bottle of whiskey which Lloyd had produced, stopped short, as if its very appearance charmed him into speechlessness.

"Would you like a little nip after coming in out of the cold?" asked Lloyd, at the same time holding forth the bottle and glass.

Stoltsgard made a deep bow, almost reverential, accepted by pouring out a drink that fully tested the capacity of the tiny tumbler, and then tossed the neat liquor off at a gulp.

"Some water?" asked Lloyd, but the Pole, with lips tightly compressed and eyes rolling, shook his head very much in a manner of stern reproof. Lloyd, a trifle amused, restored the bottle and glass to the cellarette and sat down, motioning his visitor to do likewise. "You say you taught Mrs. Frederick Ames. Do you mean the Mrs. Ames who is supposed to be such a beauty?"

"Supposed to be?" almost snorted Stoltsgard. "You have never seen her?"

Lloyd shook his head, "Only photographs."

This time Stoltsgard sighed. "Ah, like a duck pond to the ocean is her photograph to her reality. Such eyes, such hair, such teeth, such a smile, such hands, such feet, such a figure. She have always before existed only in the dreams of great artists. And you have never seen her?"

"No, but I mean to," said Lloyd, really stirred by the little man's excitement. "Tell me something about your method of teaching."

Brought back to the purpose of his call by these words, the teacher of languages replied, "The Rosenthal Method; it is like the Berlitz but simpler, quicker and not quite so thorough. I teach you to talk, see; that's what you want, isn't it?" And he rattled on.

Lloyd really had not seriously considered the study of French. His remark to Hatterman which had resulted in Stoltsgard's call had been an idle one. He had said, "I should like to learn French," just as many a man

says, "I should like to go lion hunting in central Africa," without having the slightest intention of ever doing so. Like almost every artist, he looked forward to a year or so in Paris and Rome and the other art centers of the world, and he realized that a knowledge of French would be very convenient. So he finally arranged with Stoltsgard for two lessons a week, little realizing that he had engaged himself to a man who was a positive fanatic on the subject of languages and whose grand passion was to teach them to others.

Before two weeks had passed, however, he saw quite plainly the nest he was in. One afternoon he missed a lesson. His appointment was for three o'clock and something prevented his being at the studio at that time. Then other matters came up so that he did not arrive until nearly nine. Stoltsgard was pacing up and down the hall muttering to himself.

"Ah! Why were you late?" he almost screamed.

"Sorry," said Lloyd. "But charge me just the same as if I'd been here."

"Charge you! But that is not it, charge you. That is what they all tell me, that I should charge them. But you do not understand. I am a teacher of language, and my wish is to teach, not to charge. This way you can never learn, and then my reputation suffers."

He had followed Lloyd into the studio, and was now taking his hat and coat off.

"I'm sorry," said Lloyd, seeing these preparations, "but I can't take a lesson this evening. I'm too tired."

"Tired are you? And do you suppose I am fresh like a flower standing out in your hall since before three o'clock?"

"I had no idea you'd wait," said Lloyd. "But I was unavoidably detained. Won't you help yourself?" said he, and he motioned toward the cellarette.

Stoltsgard was unable to resist the invitation and after more grumbling finally went away. But the same scene was repeated a few days later when

Lloyd missed another lesson. Finally, weary of the little man's importunities, the artist paid him for the full term and dismissed him, saying that a pressure of work would prevent his continuing.

But this had not satisfied Stoltsgard. He pestered Lloyd by calling him up over the telephone and begging that they go on with the lessons. He also called repeatedly at the studio, and finally Lloyd was obliged to speak to him very sharply. A day or two later Lloyd found the following note pinned to his door: "Lloyd, I rather teach some nigger than you. Stanislaus Stoltsgard."

But now as Lloyd walked with Mrs. Ames the poor little Pole whom he had befriended and who had shown such scant gratitude was the very last man in his thoughts. Perhaps he was tracing back, as we must, still another root of this history.

* * *

Shortly after his first meeting with Stoltsgard, Lloyd had gone to the opera on gala night; he went not only because he liked the music, not only because he preferred hearing the best act of five operas to taking the good and the bad of one, but mainly because he got many ideas from the gowns on animated display in the foyer.

Strolling about during the first intermission he met his uncle, Judge Atkinson, a man who knew nearly everybody in Chicago. They chatted a moment about a new soprano who had just scored a tremendous hit in the mad scene from Lucia.

"Most wonderful voice I ever heard; cold, but somehow it just gets down to your toes," the Judge was saying when Lloyd suddenly grasped his arm and interrupted.

"Wait! Who is that? Just a moment! Don't turn around now, she's looking this way. Now look; over your right shoulder—see, in the white shadow lace over crimson satin, with silver bead trimming and the pearl necklace—who is she?"

The Judge glanced in the direction

indicated, turned back and smiled at his nephew.

"That is Mrs. Frederick Ames," he replied. "But I'm afraid there's no chance for you, Si; she's very much married, as you've probably heard."

Lloyd, of course, knew all the current gossip about Mrs. Ames, although he had never before seen her. Others besides Stoltsgard, his teacher of French, had spoken of her to him and her name was constantly appearing in the newspapers in connection with some affair among the socially elect. Gossip said that her family being in great distress she had married Ames for his money, but that she had frankly told him so before the ceremony and given him a chance to withdraw. He, however, had been content to go on with the bargain, as he probably wanted her chiefly for ornamental purposes—but this is another root of the affair that must be clipped off short lest it prove too large for our flower-pot.

"Do you know her?" asked Lloyd, feasting his artist eye upon the vision.

"Yes, if she comes this way I'll introduce you," replied the Judge, and then, as if propelled by fate or destiny or what you will, Mrs. Ames came directly to them and put out her hand to the Judge.

Then Lloyd was introduced and for a moment they were absorbed in the commonplace triangular conversation that always follows this rite. But soon others came, the warning bell sounded and the group separated to return to their various boxes.

Lloyd was tremendously impressed and his one thought during the next three acts was, "If I could only paint her! If I could only paint her!" The artist completely dominated the man.

At the fourth intermission, strolling about in the hope of catching another glance at Mrs. Ames, he again met his uncle, the Judge.

"Coming over to the reception?" asked the latter.

"What reception?"

"Singers' reception; they always give

one on gala night; Gold room at the Congress."

"But I haven't an invitation."

"That doesn't matter, come with me. Mrs. Ames is on the reception committee and as Ames is one of the heavy subscribers, she can get you in by less than the flicker of one perfect eyelash."

So there Lloyd had really met Mrs. Ames and the attraction between them had flamed up as a smouldering fire when oil is cast upon it. Like many another woman who appears to have everything, her life was absolutely empty, and soon she was constantly looking to Lloyd to help her fill the oppressive vacuum of her days. It would be incorrect to say that she loved him. In a twelfth-century environment that might have been possible, but somehow limousines and steam heat and telephones and trolley-cars and all the other complexities of the age crowded out the *grande passion*. She enjoyed Lloyd's companionship more than she had ever enjoyed the society of any man, and as for the artist he worshipped her loveliness, finding continually new joys in the surprise of perfect lines and curves and lights and shadows. That was all. There really was no genuine love between them.

His desire to paint her might easily have been satisfied under all conventions had it not been that he wished to paint her as she could not be painted in her own home or under the eye of chaperone. Yet in the end he had triumphed. Or was it the spring morning in Central Park. Spring still does tricky things with us even amid our complexities. At any rate the roots run too far for us to follow. It is enough that Mrs. Ames is now risking position, home, reputation merely to be alone with Cyrus Lloyd for a few hours. She is perhaps risking life itself, for her husband is a vain man and the blow to his pride would be far greater than the blow to his affections, and while wounded affections languish and die, wounded pride often thirsts for vengeance and fights and kills.

But Cyrus Lloyd and Mrs. Ames, as

they walked west in Fortieth Street that balmy forenoon, were not thinking of these things. They had spent a delightful morning in the park, they had scorned limousine or taxicab for the fun of a ride in an open trolley-car, and now they were looking forward to the pleasure of several more hours together.

Lloyd's rooms were in the Sans Egal building. The couple entered and went to the second floor where the artist's studio was situated. As they stopped before the door, Lloyd drew out a bunch of keys, selected one and was about to insert it in the lock when he noticed that the door was ajar a fraction of an inch, just enough to prevent the latch from catching. Somewhat surprised, he pushed it open and stepped in to hold apart the crimson velvet portieres that hung just within the entrance.

He had probably opened that door a thousand times and noticed the same faint trace of stale cigarette smoke, that the airing of a cyclone could not have obliterated. So it was natural that he should start slightly and hesitate when his nostrils noticed an odor quite new and distinct. Then in an instant he realized that it was the smell of burnt gunpowder and a second later he saw the explanation: stretched on the floor with nearly fresh blood matting his gray hair and crimsoning his right temple was Stoltsgard, the teacher of languages.

Lloyd turned and drew Mrs. Ames out into the hall and partly closed the door. She had not seen the prostrate man.

"There's something wrong here," he explained, "something very much wrong. I don't understand it, but I must call the janitor and perhaps the police. So first you had better hurry away. I'll telephone just as soon as I get this cleared up."

She saw by his manner that the matter was serious and quietly went down the stairs and out of the building.

Lloyd immediately sought the janitor.

"There's something wrong up in my studio," he said. "I wish you'd come with me."

They found Stoltsgard lying as Lloyd had first seen him, his head bathed in blood and his body still warm. *Rigor mortis* had just begun to set in. He could not have been dead half an hour. Clearly he had been shot at close range for his face was peppered with powder burns. Yet nowhere was there any trace of a weapon. The studio was in great disorder; chairs and tables were upset and china and bric-a-brac broken and scattered about.

"I have a gun here," said Lloyd uncautiously, "perhaps he used that." He righted his centre table, pulled out a drawer and then drew back, exclaiming, "It's gone!" And he groped around in the drawer with one hand as people do when they know a thing is missing but can't understand just why.

"Hump!" grunted the janitor, and went to the telephone and summoned the police.

They arrived with much useless clang of gong and they brought in their wake several obnoxiously inquisitive reporters. These were shortly followed by the coroner's deputy. Then after much questioning of Lloyd, the body of Stoltsgard was removed to a nearby morgue, and the inquest was set for three o'clock that afternoon.

"You mustn't fail us at the inquest, Mr. Lloyd," said Police Captain Agnew, "You know you're the only witness we have."

"Certainly, I'll be there," said the artist, but he might not have said it with so much ease had he known that two men were detailed to watch him and make sure that he did not forget.

At two o'clock an extra was on the streets with vivid scarlet headline screaming, "Murder In Artist's Studio!" and at two-thirty this was followed by another, "Dead Man's Wife Alleges Artist Lloyd Is Murderer."

At three o'clock the coroner's jury met and Mrs. Stoltsgard appeared and accused Lloyd of having killed her husband. She testified that he had left

the house that morning to keep an appointment which he said Lloyd had made with him, and she also stated that her husband said Lloyd had frequently threatened him.

Then the police produced a man, the keeper of a news, cigar and stationery shop in the same building and below Lloyd's studio, who said he heard a muffled shot and saw Lloyd come hurriedly out of the building immediately afterward, both around eleven-thirty or just about the time Stoltsgard must have been shot, according to the testimony of the coroner's physician. They found the bullet, a thirty-two, and Lloyd testified that his missing revolver was of that caliber.

Then the coroner asked Lloyd where he had spent the morning and the artist replied that he had gone over to Prospect Park to sketch a peacock. He said Prospect Park quite carelessly, unaware that there were no peacocks there, because it occurred to him that he and Mrs. Ames might have been seen in Central Park and that in some way she might be traced.

"And did you get a sketch of a peacock over in the Brooklyn park?" asked the Coroner.

Lloyd nodded.

"Have you it with you?"

Lloyd shook his head, "No, it was not entirely satisfactory and I tore it up, intending to go again."

"That's all. If you'd ever been to Prospect Park, Mr. Lloyd, you'd know that there ain't any peacocks there."

The coroner's panel brought in an open verdict, but Lloyd was held to the Grand Jury, without bail, accused of the murder of Stanislaus Stoltsgard. And this was mainly because he would give no satisfactory account of his movements that morning. But it was partly because he had befriended a poor, crazy little man, who had gone home and described furious encounters with Lloyd to his admiring helpmate. It also seemed evident that he had told her whole-cloth stories of money due him that he had been unable to collect.

It was on these fictions that Mrs.

Stoltsgard had based her perfectly sincere accusation.

Lloyd told himself that he was in no danger, but that he must face something more than the usual peck of trouble. He was possessed of the better instincts of a gentleman and the dominant one was to protect the name of a woman even had he cared nothing for her. Of course, he could instantly clear himself by telling the truth. His three hours with Mrs. Ames in Central Park constituted a perfect alibi, but while that would free him, it would probably wreck her life. It never occurred to him that Mrs. Ames should come forward and testify for him. He felt sure that if the worst came to the worst she would save him.

The trial was set for September and as the date approached it began to dawn upon Lloyd that the great court of public opinion had already tried and convicted him. Here crops out another root of the affair which might be followed back to the dark ages and beyond indefinitely: why is it that the world, so skeptical in small matters, is so childishly credulous in the larger affairs of life?

And since the great court of public opinion had convicted Lloyd, the jury would probably reflect that verdict, as juries somehow nearly always do, even where men are selected who have never heard of the case.

So Lloyd began to grow apprehensive. The long confinement was telling on his nerves. He was being punished too much, he told himself, for merely wanting, with all his artist soul, to paint a beautiful woman as God made her. Surely that was no such terrible crime.

He had stuck to his story of the trip to Prospect Park, merely revising it to the effect that he had been confused when he stated that he had succeeded in getting the sketch of the peacock, and really meant that he found no peacocks. But the thing was a palpable lie and much of the suspicion against him was based upon it.

Judge Atkinson, Lloyd's uncle and

the man who had introduced him to Mrs. Ames, advised him well in the matter of lawyers, but even these most sapient gentlemen realized that their client's case was a desperate one. So, in planning the defense they decided to try for jurors as nearly as possible of a type that would be little influenced by "Things in the air." They aimed for solid and stolid men who would weigh and act on evidence rather than those psychic individuals who are swayed and turned by the prevailing mind currents.

But in aiming after their ideal jury they exhausted all of their ten peremptory challenges before the last juror had been selected. And then the name of Frederick E. Ames was drawn from the panel.

The newspapers made a feature of it. A multimillionaire public-spirited enough to do his duty as a juror was indeed a novelty and they did their emphatic best with the story. And, of course, Lloyd's lawyers were delighted. Here was the very man they would have selected for that twelfth juror—a calm, judicial-minded man with respect for law and a hatred of public clamor—a proud man, too, but one who would be proud of helping to see justice done.

But Lloyd was horrified. The presence of Ames, as he impassively replied to the usual questions and was sworn in, seemed terribly ominous. What could it mean? Not until he saw the man he had wronged established as one of his judges did he begin to realize just how serious his offense had been. Did Ames know and was he seeking revenge in the slowest, most cruel way? Or was his presence on the jury pure accident? That hardly seemed possible. Such coincidences, we are told, do not happen in real life. Despite the apparent casualness of the whole proceeding, Lloyd felt that there was some sinister motive behind the man's willingness to serve on this jury, and he was terrified. It was the sort of thing quiet, powerful men like Ames would do. And yet Mrs. Ames could

not have told her husband, and no one else knew. Alternately his fears rose and fell until it seemed as if his mind would give away, not through fear of death, but through fear of the unknown.

Day by day Ames' presence in the jury box wore upon him. He began to feel as if he faced not a mere man, but an omniscient judge. He lost all interest in the other jurors or the presiding magistrate and watched Ames constantly to see what effect the testimony of the various witnesses and the arguments of the lawyers had upon him. But through it all Ames gave no sign. He was stolid, impassive, the very sphinx of a man. And the quieter he was, the more Lloyd feared him. Several times he found himself on the verge of screaming out, "He's the husband of the woman I was with that morning! He cannot serve on this jury!" But he restrained himself. He must protect Mrs. Ames at all costs. And then one morning toward the end of the trial he learned from a newspaper that Mrs. Ames had gone to Europe for a year of rest and travel. His blood froze. He had thought it odd that she had never communicated with him, though he realized the difficulty and the dangers. Now he understood; she had deserted him, she had gone away, out of the country, beyond call. If the worst came, what good would it do for him to say that he had been at Central Park that morning with Mrs. Ames? People would only laugh. He could now see it very plainly. And he was selling his life to protect the name of a woman who hadn't even the decency to stay near at hand, but must run away to get out of an unpleasant atmosphere.

The trial dragged, his lawyers seemed like fools in the way they allowed the prosecution to score; but he felt powerless to do anything. His fate somehow had passed into the hands of others and he must sit passive and watch blind destiny work her will. No, that was not so. His fate had passed into the hands of the man he

had wronged and this man was going to exact full vengeance.

But finally the twelve men retired to deliberate upon their verdict. They had been out nine hours when it began to be rumored that they would not be able to agree. Lloyd suffered ten hours more of agonizing suspense and then the foreman sent out word that there was an unbreakable deadlock. The Judge declined to discharge them and so after fourteen hours more they brought in a verdict for acquittal. Lloyd thanked his jury and felt very queer as he shook Ames' hand. But the man was as impassive as ever.

Lloyd's lawyers were jubilant. They felt sure that their selection of jurors had saved their client. The public still thought him guilty and that his escape was due to some legal flaw or technicality. But the public soon forgets.

Lloyd made a short trip West to recover his poise and build up his shattered nerves and body. His experience had made him a nervous wreck and he told himself that he could have borne the trial with comparative equanimity had not Ames been one of his jurors. Then, at the end of a month he returned to his studio. It was in almost the same disorder as on the morning Stoltsgard's body was found. After one look about the place the artist decided that he could not possibly occupy these rooms. He must move. Fortunately his lease was up on October 31st, so he immediately found a studio in another building and telephoned for a small van and some men. While awaiting them he began to pull down his dusty draperies.

Under the deep lambrequin of the crimson velvet portieres that screened his door, Lloyd found his missing revolver hanging by a string of stiff elastics. It was now easy to understand Stoltsgard's death. He had fastened the revolver to the elastic and then shot himself. As the revolver slipped from his hand it was jerked up under the lambrequin and out of sight. And Lloyd was not left for an instant in

doubt of the motive, for fastened to the trigger guard of the revolver was a shipping tag on which was scrawled in the dead man's odd handwriting the following: "Since I got to die anyhow because I can't find no good pupils, I hope I make a little trouble for you, you big —. Stanislaus Stoltsgard."

This cleared Lloyd quite generally in the public mind, but one thing kept troubling him: why had Ames served on that jury? Any millionaire can escape jury service by merely telephoning to his lawyers. "Yes, and might he not get on a jury in the same way?" thought Lloyd.

He heard that Mrs. Ames had returned to town and wondered if his acquittal had had anything to do with the change in her plans. He waited two weeks, expecting to hear from her. Then he called up, but as soon as she heard his voice and realized who it was, she hung up the receiver. This happened three times.

And then the opera season once more came around and between the first and second acts of "Tosca" he again met Mrs. Ames.

"Why have you refused to answer my telephone calls?" he asked.

"A promise which I am momentarily breaking now that you may never give me new occasion," she replied.

"I think I see. Is that why your husband got on my jury?"

She nodded gravely. "I told him that if he did not save you I would come forward and tell the whole truth. He wished to avoid the humiliating scandal at any cost. But one condition was that I never speak to you again, and from this moment, my dear friend, I never shall."

"Oh, but why didn't you give me some sort of a hint that all would be right? I suffered agonies during that trial."

"That was the other condition: that I communicate with you in no way. That was how Ames took his revenge." And she strolled on down the foyer, nodding and smiling to her numerous acquaintances.

THE WINDY SHOT

A SUBTERRANEAN INCIDENT IN ONE ACT

By Edward Harold Conway

CHARACTERS

A PARTING BOSS

A DRIVER

A MOTORMAN

A TRIP-RIDER

A TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT

PLACE: *Central Illinois.*

TIME: *The Present.*

SCENE—A parting in a coal mine, located three hundred feet underground at a distance of over one mile from the main shaft. At Right an entry leading to the working face; at Left an entry, the mouth of which is blocked by a heavy wooden door, leading to the main shaft and a section of the rooms; at Left Back an entry leading to the air course and another section of the rooms. All three passages are connected by narrow-gauge tracks under the regulation of a switch at Center. A trolley wire, suspended about a foot from the low roof, runs through entry Left to the entrance of entry Right on a line with the tracks which are farthest down stage. The height of the parting varies from six to seven and a half feet, this variation being due in large part to the many "niggerheads," or convex projections of slate, which mark the formation of the roof. The depth is in the neighborhood of fifteen feet. Illumination is supplied by the carbon lamps attached to the cap of each miner and by two electric lights, placed at the entrances to entries Left and Right, which gleam dimly through dust-coated globes. The parting is always in half gloom, a condition which does much to intensify its atmosphere of depressing solitude. At Right Back a group of supporting timbers, on one of which is hung a shabby coat. Fastened to the twin-recessed back wall, whose surface glows dully with coal luster in contrast to the opaque-ness of the slate forming the roof, are seen a chalked, rectangular blackboard; a curved peg holding powder accounts; a second chalked blackboard, slightly smaller than the first; and a smudged calendar. On the floor, near the back wall, a shovel; two dinner pails; a funneled can of water; a square tool-chest of good proportions and a mild litter of banana peels. Behind, and trifle to the left of, the switch an antiquated telephone resting on crossed props.

As the curtain rises the PARTING BOSS, a stockily built man of about forty-five, is disclosed in a characteristic attitude, seated on the ground, with his back against the tool-chest and his knees drawn up before him, abstractedly smoking a pipe. He is wearing heavy trousers of dark material, glazed by long usage; a coal-stained woolen shirt beyond whose elbow-length sleeves protrude the arms of an undershirt; and a miner's cap with carbon-lamp attachment. His face is smirched with coal dust, as are the faces of all the underground characters that subsequently appear. His manner is morose; his speech gruffly cynical; his unvarying mood one of brooding preoccupation.

From the direction of entry Left Back issues a series of cries raucous with exhortation, and a moment later a mule, drawing three cars of coal, stumbles into view. The DRIVER, with one foot poised on the tail-chain and the other on the drawbar, is vigorously beating the animal with a short whip, the while he berates him with no less vehemence. In performing this difficult feat he is crouched low to escape collision with the niggerheads on the roof. Startled from his dark reverie, the PARTING BOSS rises reluctantly to his feet, lays his pipe on the tool-chest, and throws the switch—backward: mule, cars and driver disappear into entry Right by the tracks up stage. The PARTING BOSS rights the switch, after which he busies himself with an examination of some ties down the tracks pending the early return of the DRIVER from entry Right. The latter appears to be in the late twenties. He is a pleasant, outspoken young fellow, and his earnest air tends to emphasize the cynical attitude of the other. The details of his attire correspond in general to those of the PARTING BOSS'. This may also be predicated of the remaining characters. In fact all the underground workers dress essentially alike, there being no wide diversity of occupation and the temperature varying but a few degrees winter and summer.

DRIVER

Gimme a drink o' your water, Frank.
(Without answering, the PARTING BOSS goes to the tool-chest, draws a key-ring from his hip pocket, and selects a key. Throwing back the top, he tenders the DRIVER a dinner pail of water. The latter rinses his mouth thoroughly, to the accompaniment of a sprightly sprinkling of the ground in his immediate vicinity, and then drinks his fill. With an audible sigh of satisfaction he returns the pail to the PARTING BOSS, who replaces it in the tool-chest, which he relocks. (Mildly exasperated) That bohunk up there in room fifteen is all the time kickin' for more

cars. He gets my goat. (Begins rolling a cigarette.)

PARTING BOSS

Oh, let him kick an' be damned. He's gettin' his turn same as the rest.

(His lamp having died down and finally gone out, takes from one of his pockets a carbon can and fills the magazine with the lumpy ammunition. He spits upon the carbon to moisten it. Then after returning the top, holds the open face of the lamp to the pointed flame of his companion's light. Ignition is attended by a smart spurt of fire. The lamp is thereupon restored to its customary position above the visor of

his cap. The process thus described is accomplished leisurely while the ensuing conversation is in progress.)

DRIVER (*smiling reflectively*)

Funny, ain't it, how a slate fall works on them furreigners? Don't seem to make much difference how long they've been down below—they begin to get nervous right off the reel. The little Greek's been barkin' at all of us ever since that piece o' slate fell an' pinched his fingers last Monday. . . . (*With sober significance*) All the bohunks 'll be jabberin' up there to-morrow, though, if the mine keeps on workin' at the face the way it did to-day.

PARTING BOSS (*apprehensively*)

Them timbers breakin' there agin?

DRIVER

No, they ain't breakin' but they're bulgin' out quite a bit an' pushin' down into the bottom.

PARTING BOSS (*uneasily*)

This whole section must be creepin'. . . . Soon as the motor clears out I'm gonna get the pit boss on the 'phone. (*Musingly*) You're right about the bohunks—they're scared as hell o' slate falls.

(*A pause.*)

DRIVER (*his eye twinkling*)

What d'ye think o' the man we took into the local last night, Frank?

PARTING BOSS

I ain't seen him yet—I wasn't at the meetin'. But one o' the boys was sayin' he don't look like he ever dug coal.

DRIVER

He ain't. He said he used to be with a railroad gang, so they put him with the tracklayer.

PARTING BOSS (*with a grim fervor born of intense conviction*)

Well, it's my opinion the union ought to spend some time investigatin' the new men before they're takin' in. An'

we ought to have some scheme o' checkin' them up after they are in—so's we can know who's all right. For all we know the company's got men down here right now tryin' to get the goods on us.

DRIVER (*good-humoredly*)

What difference does it make anyway? We get their ten dollars.

PARTING BOSS

What difference! Say, it makes a whole lot o' difference! If you don't think so, just get a list o' the unions that's been bumped in the last ten years through bein' careless—like us. How do we know where half these tramps that join come from? How do we know they're tramps at all? Why the way things is run now a cop in full uniform could get into local 322. . . . (*Explosively*) Yes, by God, they'd let William J. Burns himself in—if he paid his ten dollars!

DRIVER (*keenly amused*)

I knew I'd get a rise out o' ya, Frank. You been harpin' on that for the past year. It's the same dope all the time. You've gotta bug that every new man we take in is a dick in disguise. Honest, to hear you talk you'd think the McNamara boys belonged to our local!

PARTING BOSS (*with sullen resentment*)

An' to hear some o' you guys talk you'd think we was a Sunday school organization an' didn't have a black mark against us.

DRIVER (*swiftly serious*)

Well, there ain't—outside o' beatin' up a few strike-breakers. Jim Buckley's murder was the only raw thing we was ever mixed up in, an' you know the same as I do they had us wrong there. Why even the coroner said there was nothin' to show the organization was behind it.

(*At the reference to Buckley the PARTING BOSS is seen to wince slightly.*)

PARTING BOSS (*cynically*)

Aw, hell, he had to say that. We got him his job. That let him out—don't y'see? (*With splenetic conviction*) But he knows that one of us down here done it, an' by God so do the cops!

DRIVER (*in startled amazement*)

Why how can *they* know that—when we don't even know it ourselves? You talk as if you was on the inside o' the whole affair.

PARTING BOSS (*confusedly*)

Well—ya fool—I mean—they think they do. So does everybody in town. (*Sullenly*) They been watchin' us for the past ten months an' a half an' don't you forget it.

DRIVER (*bemusedly*)

Ten months an' a half? Is it that long? Zowie. I'll never forget that mornin'! I shiver every time I go in the office even yet. . . . Well, I sure hope they land the right man. It'll clear the union, Frank, that's certain; for he can't show we knew anythin' about it or had anythin' to do with it. It was a mighty funny job, all right—(*disgustedly*) an' a damn dirty one.

PARTING BOSS (*with narrowed eyes*)

D'ya mean to say ya wouldn't stick by one o' the boys if—they got him?

DRIVER

No. Why should I? Why should any of us stick by him? I tell ya that's what's queerin' union labor all over the country. The people have got to thinkin' that every fool what dynamites a bridge or croaks the president of a company or blows up a shaft is bein' sicked on by his union; an' so long as we stick by the nuts they'll go on thinkin' it. I tell ya we gotta throw that crowd overboard.

PARTING BOSS (*derisively*)

You're a hell of a union man, you are! You ought to be with Billy Sunday!

DRIVER

Maybe you're right there. But my idea of a hell of a union man is the guy what expects the gang to stick by him an' swear him out o' jail when he's been pinched for pullin' off a *private* job—like this was. That's Molly Maguire stuff an' you know it!

(*The two men face each other tensely. The gaze of the DRIVER quivers with awakened condemnation, that of the PARTING BOSS glowers with renewed suspicion. The trolley wire before them begins to hum, and from the direction of entry Left comes a muffled roar, which gradually increases in volume. The PARTING BOSS relaxes his tense attitude.*)

PARTING BOSS (*with an unpleasant leer*)

Here comes the motor.

(*The DRIVER exits Right, his walk reflecting his inward disquiet, while the PARTING BOSS, after a lingeringly speculative look, turns slowly toward entry Left. He draws back the air-door, blocking the entrance till it hugs the wall, placing a piece of broken rail against the outer lower corner to hold it in position. There is a grinding sound as the motor nears the parting, and the gleam of a headlight on the rails. The PARTING BOSS jogs over to the switch. The low, heavy motor enters the parting, the wheel of its trolley-pole emitting spurts of greenish-white flame as it runs along the wire. The MOTORMAN, seated at the back, has one hand on the wheel-brake and the other on the controller. When about six feet from the switch the motor is uncoupled from the train of empty cars by the TRIP-RIDER, who runs up suddenly from Left. It takes the down stage track to the edge of entry Right. The moment the motor has cleared, the PARTING BOSS throws the switch and the trailing cars, some twenty-eight in number, exit through entry Right by the up stage track. The empties cleared, the PARTING BOSS restores the switch to its upright position.*)

TRIP-RIDER

How many loads have you got on this trip?

PARTING BOSS

Twenty-two.

(The TRIP-RIDER exits Right. For about two minutes the noise of cars being coupled jangles on the ears. The MOTORMAN, crossing tracks, picks up funneled can near tool-chest and replenishes the water in his carbon-lamp.)

MOTORMAN

Say, Frank, there's something wrong back in the 7th North. Every time I go through there I find fresh pieces of slate on the tracks. I've been grindin' over slate for two or three days. . . . There must be a squeeze comin' on over from them old works.

PARTING BOSS *(with moody conviction)*

D'ya know, that's just what I think. We're havin' the same trouble out here. I got an idea the whole section must be squeezin'.

MOTORMAN

Well, it looks mighty like it.

PARTING BOSS

Soon as you clear out I'm gonna call up the PIT BOSS.

(Returning to his charge, the MOTORMAN methodically shifts the trolley-pole and starts the motor. The "trip" of loaded cars slowly traverses stage, preceded by the same spasmodic sputtering of the trolley-wheel. There is a clatter of couplings as each car passes the switch. Crouched on the rear end of the last car is the TRIP-RIDER. He waves a silent farewell to the PARTING BOSS. The latter closes door at entry Left, deadening the song of the retreating train. He has just turned about when two faint, though sharply explosive, reports, occurring about three seconds apart, cause him to halt abruptly. He continues to listen intensely for a few seconds; then, following a

moment's indecision, strides briskly towards the 'phone. He takes down the receiver, places it to his ear, and is about to ring the bell when the door Left is thrust open with a bang, distracting his attention. The TRACK-LAYER'S ASSISTANT enters, carrying a keg of nails and a spike hammer. He closes the door after him. Slight in build, and looking to be about fifteen years younger than the PARTING BOSS, his bearing is chiefly remarkable for its air of covert alertness.)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT *(cheerfully)*

Howd'y!

(The PARTING BOSS hesitates uncertainly, then with a show of annoyance hangs up the receiver.)

PARTING BOSS

You came up to fix that bad joint, didn't ya?

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT

Yes, the boss said you wanted something done in a hurry. Where's the bad joint at?

PARTING BOSS *(gruffly)*

Over here.

(Leads him to spot on tracks about ten feet right of switch, bends over ties with him and indicates place needing repair.)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT

Yes, I see it all right. I'll fix her up.

(Removes lamp from cap and lays it near him on a tie. Assuming a kneeling position, he proceeds to pull a spike or two out of the adjoining ties.

The PARTING BOSS stands over him.)

PARTING BOSS *(gruffly curious)*

Ain't you the man we took into the local last night?

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT *(looking up sharply and surveying his questioner)*

Yes, I got a card last night. . . . But I don't remember seeing you there.

PARTING BOSS (*with cool insolence*)

Ya don't, eh? Well, I'm glad to see you've gotta pretty good memory.

(*He turns towards the 'phone again. The brows of the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT contract in sudden surprise, then with a grin he resumes his work. The PARTING BOSS removes the receiver, applies it to his ear, and is on the point of ringing the bell when he is again interrupted—this time by four clear, staccato reports, crackling in quick succession. They sound much less remote than the previous detonations. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT springs to his feet in a flash, standing in a tense, attentive posture. In rising he has knocked over the keg of spikes and sent the spike-hammer against the rails with a resounding clang. The PARTING BOSS wheels from the 'phone, recoiling a little as he surprises the other in his singular attitude. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT, reading the look of mingled astonishment and suspicion on the face of the PARTING BOSS, appears a trifle confused. He hastily recovers his hammer and begins the task of collecting the shattered spikes. The PARTING BOSS regards him curiously.*)

PARTING BOSS (*still holding receiver to his ear*)

You seem to be worried over some-thin'.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT

Why—just for a second I thought that somebody—had let loose an automatic.

PARTING BOSS (*frankly puzzled*)

An automatic? (*With a dawning grunt of discernment*): Oh-h, I fergot you was green. Naw, them weren't pistol shots—this section's workin' some that's all. (*As he catches the uncomprehending look on the other's face*): A lot o' the places need to be retimbered. The old timbers get to crackin' like that sometimes when there's too much pressure from the roof.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*nodding*).

I get you. I guess I'm a rube at this game all right.

(*He lines up the rail with the permanent track and commences respiking. The PARTING BOSS lapses into one of his moods of frowning abstraction. Mechanically he hangs up the receiver, lifts his pipe from the top of the tool-chest and absently lights it. From time to time he bestows a look of scowling speculation upon the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT. Abruptly casting off the mood, he clears his throat after the fashion of one who has reached a difficult decision, and addresses his kneeling companion with ominous gentleness.*)

PARTING BOSS

Pretty familiar with guns, are ya?

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*starting*)

No, not very. What made you think that?

PARTING BOSS (*with ironic casualness*)

I thought perhaps ya might be from the way ya said that sounded like one o' them automaticks. Most o' the new men says a mine that's workin' sounds like dry twigs a-snappin'.

(*A single report intervenes.*)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*with patent insincerity*)

Why, now that I hear it again, it does sound more like twigs snapping—don't it?

PARTING BOSS (*with slow, pregnant emphasis*)

Well, I ain't never heard a *miner* say it sounded like one o' them automaticks, an' I ain't never seen a *miner* jump up all of a sudden—as if he was gonna pull one! I don't expect there's a man down here could tell ya the difference between automatick shots an' shots from a reg-lar gun. The plain clothes cops carried them durin' the last strike. . . . But I don't recollect that any o' them ever went off.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*ignoring the insinuation, and showing signs of growing uneasiness as two more reports ring out, more violent than any of those that preceded*)

Say, don't anything ever happen when the timbers go on cracking that fast?

(*He glances furtively at the walls and roof of the parting.*)

How long can they keep it up without—caving in? You feel sort of shut in down here if there's any trouble—a full mile at least from the cage and three hundred feet from the top.

PARTING BOSS

When you been down here more'n two weeks—(*a single report. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT winces and looks about him fearfully*)—you'll find out a mine goes on creepin' sometimes for a month or so—and then sometimes it don't. (*With grim pleasure at the other's manifest consternation*) This section's pretty bad right now, though. (*Another violent report.*) I was just gonna call the PIT BOSS when you came in. (*Two further reports. He turns to 'phone, throwing back over his shoulder with a sinister glare*) And let me tell ya that if that slate ever starts fallin' you won't think it sounds like no automatic. You'll think you're listenin' to a battery o' police guns! (*As he snatches the receiver from its hook a succession of desultory reports—some near, some distant—sets up. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT jumps to his feet, now completely overwrought. The PARTING BOSS gives the bell one long and three short rings. He is forced to shout to make himself heard at the other end. Urgently*) Hello! Hello! Is that the bottom? . . . This is No. 8 North. Say, Jim, this section's workin' like hell—looks like the whole entry might come in. . . . What? . . . Yes. . . . All right, I'll get the men out.

(*He throws the receiver in place and starts hurriedly towards entry Right. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT starts running blindly in the opposite direction. There is a brief series of furious*

reports, not unlike the rattle of musketry, followed instantly by a terrific, deafening crash. All lights are extinguished. As the reverberation dies away a heavy, irregular fall of slate is heard. This keeps up for a short space, then gives way to unbroken silence.

. . . A match is struck close to the ground near entry Right. A second later a sharp spurt of flame indicates that a carbon-lamp has been lighted. Slowly, tentatively, the lamp is raised from the ground until it reaches the roof. Lowered again and flashed about the parting its glare reveals the wielder to be the PARTING BOSS. The chaotic confusion into which the place has been thrown is also disclosed. Floor and tracks are littered with debris; the brick wall is shorn of its customary appurtenances; the twisted switch forlornly maintains an angle of forty-five degrees. The telephone box, wrenched from its supporting props, hangs suspended from its wires. Jagged segments of slate loom darkly here and there. The PARTING BOSS, taken aback at the unexpected havoc, mutters his surprise. A low moan, coming from the direction of entry Left, diverts his attention. Training his lamp accordingly he espies the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT huddled against the air-door. The latter's face twists fitfully with pain as he gingerly nurses his left arm. As the rays reach him he struggles painfully to his feet, gazing about him with a stunned look.)

PARTING BOSS (*callously*)

So a piece o' slate winged ya, eh? Well, this ain't no hospital. Get your lamp goin' while I try to get the bottom on the 'phone.

(*Though not entirely devoid of concern, there is as yet no trace of urgency—no hint of present or impending peril—in his voice or manner. He places his lamp on the tool-chest. By its dim light he is seen striving to get the suspended 'phone-box in a convenient position. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT has managed meanwhile to recover and light his carbon-lamp. The full extent of the debacle uncovered to him for*

the first time, he utters an affrighted cry.)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT

Why, the trolley wire's down—the whole place has caved in! Good God, let's get out of here! This damn mine is getting on my nerves—I can't stand it any longer!

PARTING BOSS (*peremptorily*)

Stop that whinin', will ya? You should've thought o' that before ya came down here. See if the main haulage is clear. The motor might've been caught in there.

(Trembling, the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT stumbles toward entry Left in an effort to comply.)

PARTING BOSS (*giving the 'phone bell one long and three short rings*)

Hello! Hello! Is that the bottom?

(He repeats the ring.)

Hello! Hello! Bottom?

(He listens expectantly for a second or two, then lets the 'phone box and receiver drop listlessly from his grasp. With a show of annoyance, speaking half to himself.)

We're cut off from the bottom, all right. That fall brought down the 'phone wire and the trolley wire. It put the whole partin' on the bum. The boys'll be laid off now till this thing is cleaned up again.

(The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT has been tugging at the air-door with his uninjured arm. As the PARTING BOSS finishes his brief soliloquy it yields, precipitating a slide of slate which carries the door from its hinges and sends the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT scurrying toward Center with a startled gasp. The rush of air extinguishes his lamp, clutched rigidly by his maimed member. Seizing his own carbon lamp the PARTING BOSS climbs some distance up the pile and peers into the choked entry.)

PARTING BOSS (*his voice charged with a new, startled note of anxiety*)

Hell, this looks pretty bad. Why

—why, it's caved in to the grass roots!

(He descends, dumbfounded, to Center, where the altered condition of his lamp flame draws from him a sudden cry of alarm.)

Look how short that flame is! There's blackdamp here!

(Drawing a hurried, experimental breath.)

By God, the place is full of it—the air course must be choked up, too!

(He wheels about and darts into entry Left Back. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT, weak from pain and bewildered by the rapid development of events, totters after him. Normally self-possessed and resourceful, this wierd encounter with unknown conditions in an unfamiliar environment has unnerved him. . . . Sharp, desperate outcries reach the ear, the panic-stricken tone of the younger man alternating with the snarling accents of the other. They reappear almost immediately, the PARTING BOSS leading. He gives the impression of a brutally powerful man crushed by some mysterious, inexorable force. Swaying a little, he stands at Center, his breath coming in quick gasps, his fingers still curved with prehensile eagerness as if ready to make a last mad effort. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT blunders about feverishly, eyes staring, mouth agape.)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*convulsively pointing toward entry Right*)

Any chance—around through there?

PARTING BOSS (*slowly regaining his bearings*)

What? . . . No. That leads to the face. Nothin' but a blank wall. *(Sniffing ominously)* God, this air's gettin' heavy.

(Stumbling, he moves over to the tool-chest, unhooks his lamp, and absently lays it on the flat top. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT involuntarily raises his disabled arm as though on the point of addressing the PARTING BOSS anew. With a cry of pain he lets it fall, limp, to his side again.)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*his face contracted with the effort of speech*)

How long—can we—last here? (*With frantic eagerness*) Could a rescue party—

PARTING BOSS (*grimly shaking his head*)

No. We're done for an' ya might as well realize it. This fall's been comin' on for some time an' it's taken in the whole section. (*Indicating entries Left and Left Back*) The main haulage an' the air course is both choked up to the roof—how far God only knows. A cat couldn't get through there, lettin' lone a rescue gang. With that blackdamp eatin' up what little air there's left we'll last about ten minutes. (*With vehement self-reproach*) Only a fool would've stayed here with the mine workin' that way. . . . I ought've got out o' here an hour ago.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*a look of quizzical comprehension illumining his features. Laboriously*)

You knew—the danger—all the time? You knew—this might happen—any minute? And you let me stay here—a green man? (*Suddenly hysterical*) You're a murderer—that's what you are! You're a murder—

PARTING BOSS (*turning fiercely, seizing his menacing companion by the shoulder, and sending him hurtling over pieces of slate*)

Shut up, ya whinin' fool, ya! If it wasn't fer you, I'd be up on top myself—not down here lettin' the blackdamp suck all the oxygen out o' my lungs.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*dazedly passing his uninjured hand over his forehead*)

For me?

PARTING BOSS

Yes, fer you. Why d'ya suppose I was standin' there sleepin' when the timbers was crackin' all around me an' the whole damn entry was comin' in to

trap me like a rat? Me, that's been minin' fer twenty-four years an' could smell a squeeze comin' on three partin's away! Becuz I was thinkin' o' you. I was thinkin' o' you when I should've been thinkin' o' the men back there in the rooms—and o' myself. I was thinkin' o' you then, an' by God—
(*He clutches his throat convulsively as he reels against the tool-chest, gasping for breath.*)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*with a flash of his former alertness*)

Thinking of me? Why should you have been thinking of me?

PARTING BOSS (*thickly, the effect of the stifling, invisible fumes becoming momentarily more pronounced. Both men are wheezing now, and the younger one particularly reflects his weakening condition in the increased heaviness of his movements. With dull malignance*)

Why should I be thinkin' of anybody that comes down here pretendin' he's a miner when he's a—

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*with a ghastly smile*)

Detective?

(*While the PARTING BOSS stares glassily at him, he stumbles over to his side and plucks him by the sleeve. His eyes brighten for a moment, and his brows contract as if he were struggling to remember events long past*)

Did you kill—Jim Buckley?

PARTING BOSS (*colorlessly*)

Yes, I killed him. He disgraced my little girl—an' took her from me.

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*passing his hand over his eyes, and seeming briefly to forget the tragedy of his situation in this new interest*)

I thought—it was one of the Greeks. (*Sinking down on a piece of slate, he presses his hand to the back of his head, making a feebly wry face*) We found a knife—near the wash house.

PARTING BOSS (*smiling grimly as he sways*) — PARTING BOSS (*resuming his rhapsody on his knees*)

I got that knife from a Greek buddy what worked with me over at the old Central twenty years ago. . . . I did him a good turn once an' he gimme the knife an' a package o' tobacco. . . . It was layin' in the kitchen—my girl used it fer a peelin' knife. She was cryin' an' tellin' me she'd have to go 'way . . . fer he said he wouldn't marry her like he promised an' . . . she was ashamed to stay home an' face the neighbors. . . . I grabbed up the knife an' run out the back door. . . . (*He gasps pretty hard at this point and finds difficulty in continuing. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT is in a comatose state, dimly conscious of the recital. From time to time he presses his hand against the back of his head, as if the pain were intolerable, and utters a low moan.*) I knew he'd be at the office that night. The next day was pay day. . . . He was alone. . . . He said he wouldn't marry her. . . . Said she was common property. . . . (*Movingly*) My girl! . . . I can see him layin' there now, with his white hands an' that smile o' his. . . . When I got back—Mary was gone. . . . I ain't never seen her since. (*His head droops. He sinks, exhausted, to the ground.*)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*whimsically*)

It don't make much difference—now . . . does it? (*He lays his hand tenderly on the back of his head as his face writhes with pain.*) God, my head's breaking!

PARTING BOSS

That's the damp, my boy. I'm be-ginnin' to feel it myself.

(*The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT sinks forward, prostrate. The PARTING BOSS, falling to his knees and gritting his teeth with the effort the work entails, scoops out a little hole in the ground with his hands. By a supreme effort he manages to get the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT'S body in a position where his face is over the opening.*)

I'm glad it's all over. . . . I'm glad. . . . It's been killin' me fer ten months an' a half. . . . I didn't want to go to the chair fer killin' that dog. . . . I'm glad I'm goin' like this. . . . In the mine. . . . (*With feeble pride*) In my own—partin'. (*The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT wearily lifts his face from the hole. There is pitiful inquiry in his eyes. The PARTING BOSS turns with a wan smile and points at the dying lamp.*)

PARTING BOSS

Keep your eye on the lamp, pardner. You'll live till the lamp goes out.

(*He seems peaceful, resigned. There is the ghost of a smile on his lips. The TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT, fascinated, gazes at the lamp, now nothing more than a pin-point of flame. When he turns away his expression suggests the grotesque leer of an imbecile. His eyes are abnormally bright. He grins idiotically and babbles away to himself. The PARTING BOSS'S head slowly careens toward the ground, where it remains. The other murmurs along childishly for some moments. As the lamp on the tool-chest expires a little cry escapes him; and his head pitches forward over the hole. . . . The muffled boom of a distant explosion faintly reaches the parting. The low murmur which follows it gathers strength with uncanny rapidity. There is a mighty sound like that of a rising tempest. A cyclonic rush of air whistles through the place with brief but terrible fury, and a moment later is gone. . . . A tremulous gasp vitalizes the inky obscurity. An inarticulate mumbling, and the noise of a figure painfully scrambling to its feet. A match flares up, then abruptly goes out.*)

PARTING BOSS (*his voice vibrant with wonder*)

Why, there's air here! We've got a circulation! (*He hastily lights his carbon lamp, curving its rays about the parting.*) By God, am I dreamin'?

The partin's all messed up agin—there must've been an explosion! (*With sudden, wondering conviction*) Why, hell, it was a windy shot—the bottom's swept clean! (*By the dim light of the lamp he is seen to pass his hand across his forehead as his amazement grows. With a nervous cry of elation*) The air course is open agin! Good God, it's a meracle! (*He dives over pieces of slate to where the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT is lying, and shakes him excitedly by the shoulder.*) Get up, man, get up! There's been a windy shot what's cleared the air course! One o' them fool Greeks has fired his own shot with too large a cartridge, an' he must've raised a wind that'd set hell free! It's a meracle—that's what it is! . . . D'ya hear me? Get up! Get up, man! There might be another fall before we get to the air shaft! (*He half lifts, half pulls, the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT to his feet. The latter begins to laugh insanely; then stopping almost as abruptly as he began turns with animal quickness to confront the PARTING BOSS. He shoves a menacing finger right under his nose.*)

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*shrilly*)
Where's the knife?

PARTING BOSS (*recoiling*)
What—knife?

TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT (*suddenly assuming a childish attitude*)

Our Father which art in heaven—our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name— (*With another change to a stealthy, slinking embodiment, his eyes agleam with exultant cunning. His back is now to the PARTING BOSS.*) I fooled 'em, Chief. Said

I used to be with a railroad gang, joined the union, and they put me with the tracklayer. . . . Say, Chief, it wasn't a Greek. . . . We had the wrong dope there. . . . It was a guy they call the PARTING BOSS. . . . He confessed to me himself. . . . He got that knife from a Greek—they call them bohunks out there—that used to work with him years ago. . . . This fellow Buckley queered his daughter on a promise of marriage and he got him. . . . Say, Chief. . . . (*Convulsively relapsing into the childish manner*) Our Father which art in heaven—our Father which art in heaven—hallowed—

(*With one bound the PARTING BOSS reaches the side of the demented TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT and fastens his fingers about his throat. The look of terror with which he greeted this weird revival of a forgotten menace had been succeeded by one of fiendish purpose. By the yellow rays of the lamp, so wildly flung on a nearby piece of slate, the figure of the TRACKLAYER'S ASSISTANT is seen to crumple as before the onslaught of a Titan. As they fall, locked together, the head of the younger man strikes the jagged edge of an enormous section of detached rock. The PARTING BOSS jumps up with frantic alacrity and looks about him fearfully. His eyes take on a cunning glint as he bends forward again suddenly and moves the body so that the head is squeezed tightly under the projecting fragment. He listens, motionless, for a moment or two; then picks up his carbon lamp. At the entrance to entry Left Back he turns for a final look, his whole frame quivering, the hand that carries the lamp shaking violently. Eyes dancing with horror, he goes staggering out of the parting as the curtain falls.*)



WOMEN are nothing if not versatile. The same voice that sings the baby to sleep sometimes scares its father half to death.

THE LAST POET

By Orrick Johns

THE planet slain by lyric pain
Lay crushed against the Universe,
And threw off rhyming molecules
And bits of quaint atomic verse.

The winds that had been torturing
Its surface with their flute-like tones
Were hushed to hear the mountains sing
Their parting diatessarons.

The seas were falling drop by drop
In vain revenge upon the sun,
Seeking to put its glitter out . . .
The moon into a gold thread spun.

High up upon a distant star
Lolled sleepy-lidded Pierrot,
He plucked the strings of his guitar,
He sang, and turned his eyes below. . . .

"I like to see the people dead;
I thought it was a merry din;
The rivers were a lovely red . . .
I lingered at the death of Sin,—

"Into the sea I saw one fling
His mistress, drunk with love and wine . . .
I do not care for anything,
I only long for Columbine!



A MAN is called a good fellow for doing things which, if done by a woman, would land her in a lunatic asylum.



HAPPY the man with an easy conscience! And even happier the man with no conscience at all!

THE CAD

By Harry Kemp

I SOMETIMES believe in spirit-possession, that one can conceive a devil within one, that grows through the use of one's abdicated personality. Perhaps this was my case. . . . But no, such an explanation is so weak, so evasive. And I intend to be strong and just now. I must not try to shift the blame. It was I myself who wreaked all this evil, no discarnate personality, but my own miserable, misguided self.

I am still a young man, but the years of my life are far too few to recompense her for the evil days that I have given her. I mean my wife, yes, my wife—the finest, noblest, gentlest woman in the world . . . in a world where there are many more fine women than men, if you would ask me.

In my college days I followed the then prevalent intellectual fashion. I soaked myself in the teachings of the great pessimists and misogynists, Strindberg, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer. I despised women without knowing much about them. I accepted every derogatory assertion made about them as indisputable scientific fact.

Now I see that every vice a man has he saddles a woman with. I held, along with many other so-called thinkers, that women are essentially insincere, that they do not know their own minds, that they are constituted by nature variable and weak. I looked on them as blind, strange creatures of emotion and instinct.

Is it possible that one human being could think this of another—of another human being who lives, suffers and feels in company with him in the same world? Tertullian was right: the incredible is the only thing in which one

can believe. . . . I refer you to the entire range of the world's literature, the history of which is nothing less than the history of insult to women.

In my present state of mind I don't blame women for anything they do. They may all run as mad as comets, if they will. No matter what they did, it would take centuries and centuries for them to even up with the ignominy men have heaped upon them.

But to return to my story.

At college I drew a great deal—caricatures of the professors and my fellow students, but very little from nature . . . the human face, that most marvelous creation of the soul, fascinated me. I loved to catch every shade of fancy that lighted or darkened the countenances of my friends, to attempt to fixate human moods and emotions on paper, and later on canvas, and in as few lines as possible. Whistler and the Japanese influenced me the most.

Gradually there grew in me the conviction that I was to be one of the world's great geniuses—an idea which my foolish teachers fostered. So when I left the little college art school I repaired straight to New York. I had a small income of my own, which a maiden aunt had left me. I took a studio and went to work, meaning soon to cast the spell of the magic of my art over the whole amazed world.

For the first year I lived a laborious, austere, almost monkish life. Indeed, the few friends I made called me "The Monk." I worked day and night, painting, painting, painting. I kept away from everybody as much as possible. I held aloof from my models, treating

them merely as mechanisms, automations. There was one girl—whose face always reminded me of a clear sunrise—who posed for me . . . sometimes she would burst out crying at some inadvertent, brusque remark I would make to her, after hours of fatiguing work to which she had been subjected as if she were a mere lay figure.

This expression of emotion always made me impatient and irritable. Women were silly and weak. They deserved to be in the position they were in. Men were rightly the masters of life. How cold the pursuit of Art and Art alone can make one. I considered myself superhuman, a sort of demi-god.

Yet, even at that, as an artist devoting all his life to his art, I was not getting on. Picture after picture of mine was sent back from exhibitions, unhung.

Now came the next inevitable phase of my career. I began to explode violently against the Bourgeoisie. I felt the pressure of an alien commercial world too great upon me. For the first time a loneliness for human companionship came over me. So I was soon caught in the swirl of Bohemia. I am a man who is content with nothing but extremes. I now neglected my work. I got a mania for being with people, for lounging about and expounding my views on all subjects.

Being a ready talker, and having a lively imagination and a pleasing personality, I readily gathered a group about me . . . a group of pathetic, bedraggled people, every one of them, for the most part, self-made failures wandering blindly about in the dark of their own artistic and literary conceit.

We soon started a revolutionary magazine. Our main thesis was that everything, by virtue of its very existence, was wrong. Our motto was to uproot everything, and to start the world anew on our own theories.

My paintings, when I did any work at all, were becoming more and more unintelligible. I founded a new school of art, calling it the Figurist School. All must be expressed by figures, sym-

bols . . . the evolution of life was toward indirections, complexities. . . . One must always suggest, never fully state. Our school created some stir in the papers. One of our group who was a journalist saw to that.

The further I got away from life the more impatient I became with life. And yet at times I got a fierce hatred of the crowd I was with. I often wished to be a sailor before the mast with clean winds blowing about me. I grew still more lonesome than before. I felt that I was merely touching on the edge of the lives of people. I wanted some one life to be intermingled with mine. I got insomnia and lay awake in the dark wondering if life were really worth while.

Then Helen joined the group.

Helen was from the West. She had large blue eyes, a pale, childlike face, a glorious head of hair. Helen was unsophisticated, romantic, ripe for hero-worship. From hearing me assert it so often, in her utter simplicity she grew to have a firmer conviction of my greatness, my genius, than I had myself. To tell the truth, I was losing faith in myself . . . a little . . . that was why I boasted so much.

Having hardly known real life, I was bored with life. That is always the way. Boastful, arrogant, suspicious, I was modeling my existence on the belief that all was legitimate for the artist. That he could do what he would. That he was above the rest of men, beyond good and evil, because of his genius.

I deliberately made up my mind that I must have Helen. Helen was already in love with me. Her eyes used to follow me about the room wherever I went. But she was obstinate. There were some things in which I had no influence over her whatever, and one of these was her regard for the feelings of her family. Finally she had her way and we got married.

The first few months of our married life were as exquisite as the golden dust, the powdery gold on the wings of a butterfly. It was she who made it so.

Yet, in spite of myself, I, too, was for a while a human being. Helen loved me in a way terrifyingly deep. With her self-sacrifice was instinctive. This gratified me. But at the same time I despised it as a weakness on her part.

By the time our life had descended to the commonplaces again my old irritation came gradually back to me. I was gentleman enough at first not to show it. I hated what I called her servility, at the same time making use of it.

Soon I would lie by her side in the dark, wishing once more for my bachelor days, for the days when I was care-free, when I could be alone as I worked, when I could paint uninterruptedly. My memory was short. One always remembers only what one wishes to remember, anyhow. I forgot my previous aching and gnawing loneliness.

I was growing to hate her . . . but I could not do without her. If she was gone for a moment I missed her, and when she was at my side I wished her away. Her very unobtrusiveness, her taking our relation for settled and granted, made me indignant against her. There was nothing she could do or not do that did not displease me.

Once I sent her away for a month to the seaside, that I might be free to work at my art. But after the first few days I missed her. I began to pile up dirty dishes. I cooked for myself and burned the food. The place became sordid. I had lost all my old bachelor neatness. I hired a woman to come in and clean up for me. I set a definite time for her coming, and would go out for a walk. But then I fumed because the definite time sometimes conflicted with my desire for working.

I hated myself for missing Helen, but I did not miss her, in spite of myself. Queer, tender moods crept over my heart for her. And, at the same time, though she had done me no evil, her very passivity made me desire to hurt her.

I determined to fight back any tenderness for her. I would get back to my former modes of life. However, a

change had been wrought within me. Maddened, infuriated at myself, I found that I had become different. Forward was the only direction, no matter where it led.

I sent for Helen to return before she had been gone two weeks. She was so glad, so radiant to be back. Again I hated myself for needing her. I imagined I saw an attitude of triumph in her very weakness.

Why had I married her? Why had I taken to myself this strange, alien, soft-voiced gentle creature?

I got a grim pleasure out of hurting her as much as I could, in subtle, indirect ways—ways which grew more and more direct. I felt as if she had taken charge of me as one takes charge of another's very soul—by a paralyzing kindness worse than the rigor of any punishment or discipline.

One day, when she came into my study unexpectedly while I was engrossed in a book, my irritation broke into storm. And for the first time she struck fire in return.

"Have I no right to live?" she cried, clutching at her breast, "no right to breathe?"

Then she went into hysterics. I grew infuriated at what I called her acting. Then she took on so that I became frightened.

At last she sat silent, white, before the fire.

"I don't want to live—I don't want to live," she moaned, "for there seems to be no way out."

"Don't talk nonsense," I remarked harshly, "there is a way out, a very simple way out—divorce!"

She fainted. I felt it to be a woman's trick. I felt as if a battle were being fought between us, and that she was winning merely by not resisting, by using that strength by which those wisely weak so easily overcome the strong.

Again I spoke of divorce.

"No—no—not that, John, not that!" she begged.

"Why not? It is impossible for us to live together any longer."

"Do not drag me through such a thing," she pleaded further, "not that—I will leave you of my own accord."

"But you will still be my wife and have a hold on me—"

"I will not hold you . . . if we must . . . oh, John, don't do this . . . in spite of myself I love you . . . I love you . . . just let me stay on," she continued in a low voice, "you . . . you need some one to take care of you."

"I can easily hire some one to come and clean up for me. . . . I can eat at a restaurant. Besides, I have fully made up my mind . . . we must get a divorce."

"But . . . but I thought!"—

Then, as a poisonous bubble arises in foul water, the supreme lie came up to my lips—but not the supreme cruelty—that was yet to come.

"You mean grounds for divorce? Well, I've made that easy—you can sue me. . . . I've already supplied the grounds."

She pushed out her hands in front of her as if to ward off something coming toward her . . . like a blind man, like one wounded in the dark, by an unseen merciless antagonist.

I had gone too far. . . . Something of the old feeling of the first two months swept back over me, and, though my creed was that an artist should have no feelings but for his art, I took the unconscious little woman in my arms and laid her on the bed.

What was I doing? What was I doing? Something not of myself, something dreadful that had crept inside of me and taken possession of my faculties was urging me on to kill her very soul.

She rose.

"I will go, dear!"

"But where?"

"Back to my work as secretary!"

My old savagery returning on me, I did not wish her to get away so easily.

"No . . . I have changed my mind—it is not necessary for you to go—you may stay."

She turned . . . trembling, eager, surprised. . . .

But she got no warmth out of the

light she saw. She only found that she was dashing herself against the cold crystal which guarded it. She fell back, wounded more than ever.

"Yes, you may stay . . . for why should we not be free beings? You can have your room here . . . I will have mine—we shall be free—free each to live his and her own life . . . you understand?"

"No . . . no . . . not quite!"

"You shall have your friends . . . your comrades . . . I shall have mine . . . you can love some one else, if you wish."

"John," she shrieked, outraged. I had driven a cruel barb into her.

"Oh, yes," I continued, twisting the barb, "I have determined to make a real radical woman of you . . . you shall have other men . . . I shall have other women. The old ideas are outworn. That is what's the matter with us, Helen. No two people should be so utterly dependent on each other as you and I are!"

"Don't . . . don't . . ." she protested, "don't . . . can't you see? I can't help myself. . . . Dear, have pity on me. You are everything to me. . . . I love only you."

"How do you know that?" I inquired ruthlessly, turning sharply upon her.

"Have you ever known other men as you know me? . . . Well, then, your love is not very clear-sighted . . . it is founded on ignorance . . . you have no comparisons to go by."

She was trembling all over . . . she knelt by the chair in which I had seated myself.

Suddenly and unexpectedly I was so moved that I did not dare let her touch me.

God in heaven, what was I about, anyhow?

I put on my raincoat and rushed out into the dark. I walked and walked. Why was I acting like this? Why? I walked and walked.

Then I felt a horror coming closer and closer behind me . . . following me up to overtake me . . . it grew larger and larger, closer and closer, till

the nightmare clairvoyance of it made my hair rise and fall in ridges. . . . No . . . no . . . I mustn't drive her to that. . . .

She was speaking to me, calling me, it seemed. . . . I could see what she was going to do . . . was doing. . . .

I was caught up, swept on. I rode on wings as I rushed back. I broke open the door, without using my key. A strong odor of gas stung my eyes. Half-blinded, choking, I flung all the windows wide. . . .

She had only made herself sick.

I was brought to my senses by this, and for several months I spoke softly to her, and treated her like a human being. I was afraid of the desperation of the woman.

But gradually my old perversity grew on me again.

* * *

"Well, dear, how do you like the new life . . . being pals in the new way?" She was silent.

"I do hope you will like some of the men you've met . . . can't you go out somewhere this evening?"

I waited a moment, then continued.

"I'm going to take Elise to the opera this evening, you know!"

Elise was a girl I had met. I was desperately trying to hoodwink myself into an affair with her, in an effort to live up to my theories.

"I would rather stay at home and read," Helen faltered.

"All right—suit yourself."

After an awkward pause I rose and put on my overcoat.

As I was going I stopped by her chair.

"Come, dear—you might as well make the best of it . . . it's got to be . . . this is the only way. . . ."

She did not answer. I went out.

It was at this time that Percival Clavering joined our circle. Handsome, well-bred he was, but I didn't like his roving, vacuous eyes. They slipped promiscuously over everything. They wavered always like shaken jelly.

But, strangely enough, my wife took to Clavering.

I tried to persuade myself that it was all right. But a vague sense of disquiet came over me. Several times I found her seated with him before our studio fire. The fact that I had just come from philandering with Elise did not keep me from resenting his presence in a most unreasonable way.

My disquiet grew and grew.

"I have no right to act thus," I repeated to myself, "I don't love Helen. . . . I want her to be free . . . but I can't help it . . . anyhow, the fellow is too sneaky, too suave."

And so I told Helen my impressions of him.

Helen was dazed at my unexpected jealousy. All the emotions, all the suffering I had put her through made her act like one who had been drugged.

"Oh, what AM I to do? What AM I to do?" she moaned, wringing her hands and twisting her fingers within each other.

"Do as you like . . . has he made love to you!"

"Yes . . . yes . . . I. . . ." She moaned distractedly, not understanding, in her simplicity, how sinister were my thoughts, my suspicions.

My voice stuck. She sat dumb, waiting. I tried with a great effort to talk philosophically. Jealous? No, I would not admit that. I would not permit myself to be—but this man was unworthy—not sincere—anyone else but he!

"Helen, listen to me. . . . I should have warned you about this man. . . . I am not going back on my beliefs . . . but . . ."

"John . . . you are killing me by inches."

"Stop that!"

"John, is there still no way out?"

"Divorce! I see that the radical way doesn't work either."

"Not divorce—not now—John, not now! It might have been, but not now!"

"What," I cried, seizing her by the wrists, "why not now?" Despite myself, a great fear rose within me.

"Tell me," I insisted, "why not now?"

She rose—staggered—dropped on her knees beside me. . . .

"Not now . . . have mercy . . . something has happened."

I rose, aghast. She remained kneeling, her face on the table. Walls of iron, as in a medieval torture chamber, seemed to be closing gradually about me. I struggled for breath. I tore my collar loose.

I bent over her, like a man shaken with palsy.

"You mean?"

"Yes," she said, simply . . . looking directly into my face with her clear blue eyes.

"His?" I whispered, tense as a bow.

A look of horror I shall never forget dawned in her face as she plumbed the hell-deep perfidious blackness of my imagination.

"No—no—good God, no! How could you think so, when I love you!"

Whirlwinds swept around me. All the madness of months burst out, volcano like, in that moment.

I did not believe her. Hardly knowing what I did, I did what I thought no man could ever be base enough to do—I struck a woman—my woman—in that condition.

What ensued was more horrible than this final desecration of my manhood. She screamed—not the scream of one who is injured physically. I knew by that scream that I had at last struck her very soul, not her body. And I also knew that she had told me the truth.

I fell on my face on the hearth rug. I buried my face in the dry dustiness of its gray-colored hair.

I dared not look up. I was afraid that by that blow I had conjured something horrible out of hell—too horrible for eyes to see and not be seared to blindness with.

I lay there beholding phantoms marching up and down, clothed in fire. I heard a rustling, a vague, infinite moving about.

When I dared lift my head she was gone.

Gone? Where to?

I was conscience sick at last. My soul was aged with remorse. All my theories had gone away like smoke.

It was daybreak. No harm must come to her. I raced to all our mutual friends. I ran to put an advertisement in the papers. No, I must not do that yet.

There was no use worrying about her. In a few hours she would surely return.

I was stirring strangely within, like a woman feeling the first pangs of childbirth.

Then came a knock at the door. I did not dare go to it. What was it that waited me on the other side? After a space I summoned up courage enough to whisper hoarsely:

"Who's there?"

The answer filled me with a strange horror, a sickness of disappointment.

"It is I—Elise!"

"What do you want?"

"I have heard. I have come to console you!"

"Go away, I beg you!"

"Dearest."

"Go . . . go. . . ."

"Don't be foolish. Let me in!"

"Go. I have already done enough damage—you are still un—"

"Can't I do something to help you?"

"No—nothing. I beg you go."

Her descending footsteps sounded beautiful to me.

The heaving and breaking of the spirit continued within me. I had been dry eyed. But now the torrents came. I wept and wept as I had made her weep. I found myself on my knees, kissing her slippers that she had left behind. Dear God, I had really loved her all the time.

My very childhood seemed to be coming back to me again. I seemed to be running among flowers, over green fields, in celestial sunshine.

And now a second clairvoyance took me.

Suddenly I was aware that she was on the way back to me. She was coming back to me, to me the cad, the brute, the pollution of the very name of manhood.

I was praying now.

"Except ye become as one of these—"

The floods of that eternal, naïve childhood preached by the Galilean were sweeping through me, cleansing me, purifying me.

I realized at last the strength, the deepness, the richness of the love that I had tortured, trampled on, stained. I saw the real nobility of all women, and the beauty of the love which they gave so unselfishly to men. And I knew that it was not women who were the weak ones, but the men.

Within my soul I felt Helen's footsteps returning.

The doorknob was turning softly.

It was I who was in her arms now. I felt a sense of holiness and forgiveness and purity enveloping me like a vast fragrance fresh from the infinite rose of the love of God.

I was almost too weak to speak. I was clean of my vileness.

"My poor little sick boy."

"You forgive me? You?" I murmured, frightened at the holy wonder of it.

"Hush, there is nothing, there never was anything to forgive."

Then I dropped my head against her breast, and wept immeasurably, as a child when it abandons itself to heart-break.



THE ANCIENT ONE

By Ann Batchelder

THE moon is older than the earth
And older than the sea,
And wiser than this love that aches
Within the heart o' me.

The moon is stiller than the night,
Sadder than song is she,
She hides her face lest any light
Reveal her mystery.

And love is sadder than love's tears,
And deeper than love's sighs,
And older than the age-long years
That look out from love's eyes.



WOMEN are like the music in hotels: they are missed when absent, but nuisances when present.



THERE is only one real folly, and that is to be ashamed of folly.

LOVE FOR ART'S SAKE

By Paul Hervey Fox

OSWALD KENT—that is not his name—was quite satisfied with Miss Dean—that is not hers—his new stenographer. She had been with him for nearly two months now, typing his stories and taking dictation. When her opinion was asked, she answered briefly and demurely; when it was not, she had the intelligence to remain unobtrusively silent. This last characteristic, indeed, was so marked that Kent concluded that she was the counterpart of her typewriter: a perfect machine and quite as inanimate. Then one day something happened that turned his theories topsy-turvy.

He had finished breakfasting in bed that morning and had gone downstairs to his study whither Miss Dean was due at nine. It was his habit to conduct his correspondence before her arrival, and he found that his mail today contained two disturbing letters.

The first of these was from his press bureau, containing a clipping of a review of his latest collection of short stories. The critic had cleverly stuck knives into him for the benefit of a public that evidently lusted for literary massacre. He was flatly damned as a man who made a pretense of being a realist and who was in actuality a mere compounder of improbabilities. That stung. For Kent knew that there was a certain amount of truth in the charge.

He had no sooner schooled himself, however, and turned his attention to the next letter, when his irritation flared up all over again. For out of the latter tumbled a brief scrawl from his agent, telling him that a certain market, which he had long earnestly desired to make,

had manifested its willingness to use a good love story by him, provided he could turn it out in a week's time. Now, in spite of the fact that he was a bachelor, there was one thing that Kent loathed and never did, and that was a love story. Yet he knew that to ignore the offer would be fatal to his future attempts to break into that group of magazines.

He was still stretched in his lounging chair, scowling at the ceiling, when Miss Dean came in. A sudden little expression of concern seemed to flash across her face as she comprehended his mood, but she said nothing beyond the usual conventional greetings.

As Kent, relaxing his frown for the moment, glanced at her pleasantly, it occurred to him for the first time that she was really quite pretty. Deep-set brown eyes, and soft, fluffy hair arranged on a well-shaped head were her best assets. A girl who looked as if she had the possibility of being dreamily, sweetly sentimental, he thought, and wondered that her curious reserve and subdued individuality should be coupled with such incongruous features. Then a novel idea came to him, the idea of proving his critic a liar, and making his agent's market at the same time. He would write a realistic love story. He would take as characters Miss Dean and himself. He would even draw them in their actual situations as writer and typist.

When, fired with impulse, Kent set the idea abruptly before her, he was amazed to see her turn quite pale. Good heavens! could the woman be actually human after all? Still it was only natural. She merely realized that with the

personal element involved, certain of the story's details would be rather embarrassing. But the plan had mounted into his brain with such a rush that he did not care to reconsider it.

He got up and began to pace back and forth over a single oblong rug while evolving his plot. Then he called out: "All right, Miss Dean; 'I'm ready if you are.'"

Love stories, of course, really need no plot. Beyond an even spreading of heroics, a care to the names and the descriptions, and a spark of originality in the proposal, there is very little to prepare. So Kent—which, as you have already been informed, is not his name—began by saying:

"I'll call the writer in this thing 'Oswald Kent.' That's a rather clever-sounding name, I think. Much cleverer than my own, certainly. And it's quite English, too. All really good authors are English—in fiction. Now as to yourself, let me see. Er—what do you think of er—of 'Miss Dean'? Simple, modest and that sort of thing, you know. Yes, 'Miss Dean' is quite appropriate."

A moment later the stenographer was putting into shorthand the introduction as it fell from Kent's lips.

The story began with a description of "Kent" striding up and down in his study, wondering why life was so futile. Suddenly his typist enters, "like a ray of sunshine," as the manuscript vividly puts it. Follows a description of "Miss Dean," running to nearly three hundred words.

It was at this point in his dictation that Kent began to be aware that he had tackled a rather awkward business. He could not see his stenographer's face, but there was something in the lines of her back, in her self-conscious rigidity that bespoke an agitation greater than that induced by the mere labor of catching and transcribing each word. But he could not very well stop now, and he plunged ahead swiftly with the idea of getting the thing over and done with as soon as possible.

I shall not bore you with the details

of that unusually uninteresting story. It was three parts dialogue, to begin with, and most of that was of the brand termed "snappy." The fictional stenographer toyed with her fictional employer's affections, simulated indifference, then revealed herself in an unguarded moment as furiously infatuated with him, then pretended to have been playing a game, and so on. You know all the old, familiar, revolting details of the ghastly business, as the white slave investigators say. It was in the climax of the piece, however, that an original note entered. Unfortunately it had nothing at all to do with the story itself.

Kent had just dictated a proposal for his prototype, and was casting about in his mind for a new kind of reply. "How's this?" he asked: "The girl flushed and turned her shapely head away. 'I never dreamed that you really cared!' she murmured half to herself. A great new light dawned in her eyes as she looked up at the young novelist, and—' Oh, that's rank!'"

Had he not been so absorbed in his attempt to discover a new phrasing for the rubber-stamp idea, Kent would have noticed that his stenographer was trembling at her desk. Yet he received a vague impression of the fact as he wheeled about and asked her: "See here, Miss Dean, I want to make this thing as natural as possible. Maybe you can help me out. Now supposing I said Kent's words to you: 'Miss Dean, I never knew, I never suspected that you thought of me other than as your employer. But certain things which you have said and done unconsciously this morning make me presumptuous enough to hope that you do not regard me with total disfavor. Miss Dean, I love you! Will you marry me?' Now what would be your answer to that? . . . Oh, my God!"

For the little typist, with the demure mouth and soulful eyes had suddenly jumped up and in a fit of passionate sobbing flung her arms around Kent's neck. Confusedly, Kent heard her blurt forth in choking syllables that she loved

him, that she loved him better than anyone else in the world, and that she would never, never leave him.

For one moment the man in him triumphed. He patted her hair and tried to sooth her with, "There, there, little lady, you're all tired out and your nerves are overstrung with too much pounding on that confounded machine. Why I never suspected—I never knew—" He came to an abrupt halt, as the artist side of him leapt up into domination. "Bacchus! what an idea! Sit down, my dear girl. I'll talk to you later about yourself and myself. But just now I want to get down this dictation while the thing's fresh."

As suddenly as she had lost her control, the little typist seemed to regain it. She knew she had gained her point, and with that knowledge she was prepared to sacrifice the tradition that love is more engrossing than art. Red-eyed

but quiet, she sat down at her desk and waited for him to begin.

With the light of inspiration in his face, Kent stood stock still, and in a sharp, nervously-excited voice began to dictate an entirely new story. The first paragraph of it ran as follows:

"Oswald Kent—that is not his name—was quite satisfied with Miss Dean—that is not hers—his new stenographer. She had been with him for nearly two months now, typing his stories and taking dictation. When her opinion was asked, she answered briefly and demurely; when it was not, she had the intelligence to remain unobtrusively silent. This last characteristic, indeed, was so marked that Kent concluded that she was the counterpart of her typewriter: a perfect machine and quite as inanimate. Then one day something happened that turned his theories topsy-turvy."



IN DONEGAL

By Seumas O'Sullivan

HIS natal sun's anointing ray
 Ordained him priestly sheer from birth,
 The common business of the earth
 His splendid care from day to day.

The freeman he of every wind,
 Initiate of each purple hill,
 The very silence seems to still
 The earth to serve his listening mind;

Master and servant, Lord and friend
 By name, familiarly he calls
 Each thing, his thought caressing falls
 O'er the wide earth from end to end.



A WOMAN always knows when a man is lying—save when he is telling a lie that she wants to hear.

CERTAINLY, IT CAN BE DONE!

By John Sanborn

(1)

SHE earned five-fifty a week, and she lived upon it,
Tho' the worried looking gentleman on the platform,
Up at Columbia, said that it couldn't be done:
Couldn't be—decently—done for less than eight to nine.
He was mistaken, as we shall see.

(2)

She worked at the hardware counter down in the basement,
The hold of a cheap department store.
It was the dismal haunt of ugly and useful things
And of fittingly ugly and useful young women—
(The more pictorial ones reserved
For the veilings and toilette counter and gloves, up stairs.)
There were endless, dull things for the kitchen and laundry;
Grimy granite; garish enamel;
Here and there an opulent bit of aluminum
Which caught and reflected the light from the dingy arcs.
It was her job to say—"Egg-beaters? Cert'ny, madam!
Nine-seventeen-cents-an'-tweenie-two!
Well, a' course, th' Improved Rotary, that's our Special,
But this here seventeen cent is a right good seller.
Cash!—Cash!—*Cash!*—Sent? CASH! Take-it-with-yuh?
Mr. Blumberg! Sign! Mr. Blumberg!
Mr. BlumBERG! Mr. Blum—Sign, please!"

(3)

At night she went to a home in a tenement,
Up several flights of creaky, evil smelling stairs.
There was a lean, single bed and shredded wheat mattress,
And a large, shining, relentless looking alarm clock.
So close to her window that, warm nights,
It would almost seem a matter for Mr. Comstock,
Elevated trains went by, with a combination
Of thunder and earthquake shock, with a dash of cyclone
Served on the side, and shook the building
As a fox terrier shakes a rat.
There was a section of mouldy and ancient carpet
Once red, now dulled to a deviled ham,
Even in summer, damp and clammy
To the touch of bare reluctant feet,
On the wall a bright, pleasing poster

CERTAINLY, IT CAN BE DONE!

Showed a vivacious young person plucking oranges
 From the tree, beneath a turquoise sky.
 It bore a Railroad's name and the heartening slogan—
 "Why not winter in California?"

(4)

In the Wash Room for Female Employees was a sign,
 "Sales Ladies Required To Present A Neat Appearance."
 It sounded simple; not an elegant or modish
 Or even attractive—merely a neat appearance;
 Yet her thoughts often ran on like this—
 "If a person could only wear white an' git it washed . . .
 Somep'n fresh ev'ry day. . . Comedy!
 Black was what they wanted yuh to wear,
 But it was somep'n fierce th' way dirt showed up on black. . .
 Gasoline smelled like th' deuce an' cost like th' devil. . .
 Oh, gee, if yuh could only find somep'n *dirt* colored—
 But, my, there was so many kinds an' colors of dirt!"
 —Her life work, to preserve, present that Neat Appearance!

(5)

That is to say, preserve it on five-fifty a week:
 A nickel carfare in the morning,
 And then ten cents more for her breakfast;
 (Walking down to work didn't really save anything—
 The exercise made her so hungry
 That she had to eat fifteen cents' worth,
 And meant, besides, a half hour's less sleep.)
 Lunch, fifteen; supper varied from twenty to twenty-five;
 Then there was another nickel, home.
 As to the laundry problem, she managed it nicely,
 With the aid of the bowl and pitcher
 Which can-canned at each passing of the Elevated.
 She did not go in for lingerie,
 And we will not go in for details. . .
 The prescribed Neat Appearance having no reference,
 It seemed, to the Department of the Interior.
 She could give excellent points to Lady Lecturers
 As to living on the Budget plan,
 But she found herself with a rather slender margin
 After her room rent, for doctor, dentist, medicine,
 Clothes, movies, emergencies, extras.

(6)

Under the head of Extras came the Hot Water Bag:
 (She never got it, but it was always before her.)
 She confided to Pearl in the Clothes-pins and Wringers—
 "I jest *gotter* have that bag, the way my feet is, nights!
 But they tax yuh a dollar fer even a small one
 That yuh c'n only warm up one foot on at a time!
 Half th' nights, there ain't no hot water!
 —A fat chanct fer a Pyro burner!
 Them stoves laps up alcohol like the Village Drunkard!"

So, she went to bed in her stockings
 And, sometimes, she pressed into service a mangy muff
 And contrived to put her feet in it,
 But it was a luxury not often indulged in,
 For it made her feel like a croquet wicket, next day.

(7)

When, sometimes, she wearied of the hunky ham sandwich,
 She would be seized with wanton desire for French Pastry,
 A crispy, flaky Napoleon . . . Pistache icing . . .
 With half a Maraschino cherry sunk in its breast. . .
 The um . . . um . . . yellow filling oozing out at its sides. . .
 It would fasten upon her fancy in the forenoon,
 And follow her out to lunch, to be sternly stamped down,
 Only to haunt the hours till supper,
 To embitter that meal, and then to sneak home with her,
 Climb up stairs and squeeze into the room,
 There to tease her yearning dreams all night.
 It was an obsession, as with Queens
 In fairy tales (sh . . . *just before the Princess was born!*)
 When they developed yearnings for impossible things,
 —Such as strawberries in December,
 Or quinces which were hid in Wicked Witches' Gardens!
 But there was always the husband, a kingly person,
 Who set sail, or leapt upon his steed,
 Swearing he would never eat or sleep
 Till he had won the desire of his lady and love.

(8)

In her case there was no one, and there never had been:
 She was thirty-three, and of an exceeding plainness—
 Indeed, she fairly went out of her way to be plain!
 In another sphere, with hairdresser,
 Manicure, masseuse and modiste, working together,
 Fast and snappy team-work, the Society Column
Might refer to her Willow Grace. . .
 Possibly her Piquant Individuality—
 Never in the hardware department, in the basement.
 Earnest Club Women, who wouldn't blame
 Poor, dear, pretty, ignorant young things for Going Wrong
 Under stinging lash of poverty,
 Needed not to spread Charity's mantle over her.
 No smooth, suave, leering Floorwalker
 Lured *her* to Seventy-Five Cent Table d'Hôte With Wine.
 The solitary Floorwalker in her department,
 Mr. Blumberg, before referred to,
 An anemic, undersized person
 With an impediment in his speech,
 Had a wife and several children
 Whom he raptly, tediously adored.
 When he held converse with his Sales Ladies on topics
 Outside the routine of the Basement
 It was to burble of the Little Home out of town,

On which he was still making payments,
 And he was the only man she knew.
 Therefore, she was as securely safe from temptation
 As a doddering inmate of an Old Ladies' Home:
 Hence she was bereft of the thrilling, poignant pleasure
 Born of the heroine's brave retort—
 "Rags is right royal raiment, when worn for Virtue's sake!"

(9)

So she went on, extolling the Improved Rotary,
 Breaking thro' the Budget now and then,
 Yielding to the blandishments of a Napoleon:
 But she never scaled the heights to the Hot Water Bag.

(10)

She earned five-fifty a week and she lived upon it,
 Tho' the worried looking gentleman on the platform,
 Up at Columbia, said that it couldn't be done—
Couldn't be—decently—done, for less than eight to nine.
 He was mistaken, as we have seen.



LINES FOR MUSIC

By Harriet Morgan

I SAW a lover and his lass
 Go down the old gray street,
 And of a sudden violets
 Were thick beneath their feet;

And little birds came out to see
 Who wandered in their bower,
 And there was a swift-winging bee
 To warn each drowsy flower;

And in the air were woodland scents
 And from a field came clover-sweet;
 I saw a lover and his lass
 Go down the city street.



DEATH—an illimitable series of entr'actes without drinks.



YOU say you have a good imagination? Then try it on this one: Nietzsche
 with a pretty girl on a moonlit summer night.

FÉLIX AND CARLOTTA

By Edna Marion Hill

"**B**UT, Monsieur O'Hora, it is not my wife that she is, my Carlotta, but my — how you say it? Ah! my sweetheart. We are so these three years past, n'est-ce-pas, little cabbage mine?" and Félix pressed his lips to Carlotta's chubby fingers. She smiled and gave him her cheek to kiss, understanding nothing of what he said but fully comprehending the caress. It really did not make any difference to her if she could not learn the English, for Félix would surely tell her, after Monsieur had gone, of all the clever things that he, Félix Ducocq, had said in that strange tongue and of how Monsieur had marveled at his knowledge of it. Didn't Monsieur say every time that he talked with Félix, "My friend, you give me a great surprise! Such English! As if you had been born with it—" and many more things just like that— But what *was* the matter with Monsieur? Carlotta stopped her complacent rocking, staring open-mouthed at the agonized Irishman.

He gasped and gurgled, opened his mouth as if to speak and shut it tightly instead. At length he stammered "What! What's all this? Not married?" he stopped to swallow. "My goodness! I never heard of such—"

"Mais, cher monsieur what is the matter? We are not married—no—but—"

"And to up and say it to my very face. The impudence of you! It's my wife you won't be talking to so freshlike." James Richard O'Hora bolted madly out of the door, leaving Carlotta frightened and tearful and Félix, for once, speechless.

O'Hora tramped his agitated way up

the hill toward his big square house, his head in a whirl. What Mary Ellen O'Hora would say, he did not know, and herself mad enough last week to be turning Ingrid Johnson out of the house for having the same symptoms as herself—and Ingrid's baby born out of wedlock—except that the creature had no place to go and good girls were hard to get for the house these days. And now she'd be strong for firing the Ducocqs off the place, and they such fine farmers, making money off that north forty with their sugar beets—a thousand dollars to his share that year, and never a cent from it before they came. Sure they might have known something wrong about the foreigners, the way they "spooned" around until it was a scandal to all the neighborhood—and they not married all the time. Married they must be and at once.

Mary Ellen thought so, too, without a moment's hesitation. For two hours she orated upon the sinfulness of the world and of Félix and Carlotta in particular, while her husband agreed loudly and firmly, with rising indignation. The conference upon morals suddenly ceased with the appearance of Ingrid—they didn't like to speak of things like that before the poor girl—and James Richard drove off to the village to make arrangements for the wedding of the sinners and the restoration of the country to decency. That was a woman, he thought, that Mary Ellen O'Hora, worth her weight in gold, always knowing what to do and afeared of nothing. But a tongue in her head! Good luck for him that she never found out about that little devil of a Jennie O'Reilly. Heaven help him if she ever did!

So it was settled that day that Félix and Carlotta should marry in three weeks, and O'Hora drove home again quite pleased with himself. But Carlotta wept when she heard of his ultimatum.

"Why, mon Félix, spend so much of our money on this wedding when we are so well as we are. Are we not happy, and earning much, much money each year? If only the little one had stayed with us, what more could we want?" she protested.

"Nothing could be better, I think. But the boss, he says we must marry or—well, if we do not, we live apart again, and that is not possible. What would you do without me? It is strange—here in this country, I thought"—Félix paused. "Fool that I am to have said ought to him! But anyway, we marry. It will make no difference except for the money. I shall love you just the same."

"Then I am satisfied, if you will not grow weary of me, like other husbands. We shall stay here, shall we? And maybe, after a while, there will be another child, a little son this time, and he will go to the little school on the corner—" Carlotta's rosy face resumed its placid look and she composed herself to lace-making and dreaming while Félix spelled out the weekly paper.

But there were many things to be done about this marriage, and many trips to the village and many, many conferences with Father Flaherty. Carlotta willingly confessed and returned to the church, but Félix was stubborn. Religion, said he, is good for women who cannot think. But for a man—it is not necessary. From that position he would not budge, and the good Father had to give up his cherished hope of bringing back to the fold these two erring children of the church and marrying them within its sacred walls. A wedding in the house could not mean so much as it should, he thought. A more pressing and immediate problem presented itself. What was to be done with them in the interval before the ceremony? Rather foolish, it seemed,

to separate them now after three years of living together and what a fuss they would make! Father Flaherty decided to let them stay as they were.

The day arrived, warm and bright, a shimmering haze softening the fires of the woods and lying gently over the stubbly fields and hills. Quite reconciled, even happy, Félix and Carlotta climbed into the back seat of the O'Hora family carriage. Mary Ellen cast an approving, if somewhat amused, glance upon them. James Richard chirruped loudly to his horses, trying hard to repress his amusement. Félix's moustache was waxed and curled, his blond hair lay in carefully formed ringlets upon his shining forehead and his squeaky boots gleamed resplendent in the sunshine. Proudly he smiled upon Carlotta, whose new finery, from the ornaments in her ears to the bouquet of white asters in her hands, did him justice. She had a white dress and new white canvas shoes, just like an American bride. But Carlotta was docile and quiet, not like these American women, and he, Félix Ducocq, was far more the favorite of fortune than the poor Monsieur O'Hora, who sat so meekly beside his "bossy" wife. Félix drew Carlotta close to him; saluted her loudly and lovingly upon the lips. Mary Ellen started. So did James Richard. Then both stared discreetly at the road ahead of them. Again Félix kissed Carlotta and rode the rest of the way to the village, sitting grandly upright, holding her in a close and very obvious embrace.

Mary Ellen also sat grandly upright. Here she was put to shame before her neighbors by these heathenish Belgians with their jabbering and their kissing and hugging right out on the road that way and James sitting there ready to burst himself with joy over their goings-on. And him with his face, that solemn, the deceiving rascal! How Father Flaherty would take it if he should see them, she rather wondered. He should be ashamed of them by rights, but many, many times he and James had chuckled and looked at each

other when there was nothing funny at all that she could see.

Father Flaherty's eyes rested thoughtfully upon the pair in the back seat as they drove up, then twinkled as he looked at the O'Horas. An answering twinkle danced up into Mary Ellen's eyes. After all, she thought, they must have looked funny.

"How are you, Mrs. O'Hora? And the fine boys? I am glad to hear it. And you, my children, it is good to see you." Carlotta bobbed respectfully. Félix, the unregenerate, looked long and earnestly at the priest, then suddenly dropped on one knee and kissed the outstretched hand. Carlotta promptly imitated him, careful not to drop too far lest the new dress be soiled.

Father Flaherty walked between them into the house, talking all the while to Félix, but patting Carlotta's hand and turning to smile at her. He liked this couple with their open show of affection, the man's pride and his fiercely protecting air, the woman's unquestioning faith in the man's power and tenderness. "She has the look of a child—or a Madonna—I don't know which," he thought. "Let us sit here and visit a moment. It is not yet time for our wedding," he smiled, picking out a low chair for chubby Carlotta. From crops and profits he led the talk to plans for the future, and then somehow began speaking in glowing phrases of their own future; of the beauty of true and faithful human affection, of the happiness and the sorrow they had had, of the greater happiness to come to them with the blessing of God and the church hallowing their joy and glorifying their love for each other and following them through all the years of their lives.

Mary Ellen felt her heart growing tender as she listened. After all, this was her doing, hers and James', that two erring souls were being restored to righteousness. Carlotta fixed her uncomprehending eyes upon the priest, loving the look in his eyes, the smile that came so gently. But Félix was

nervous. His eyes glowed. All at once he cried out—

"But, Père Flaherty, it is not true that all are blessed who are wed in the church. Behold, I, I was married at home in the village and by the good Father there. But all the blessings of God brought me no happiness. No, only misery—misery—to make one want to die—"

"You have been married!"

"Yes, a devil! She—"

"She is dead?"

"Non, non. I leave her—"

"Félix," the priest pleaded. "Are you sure she is not dead?"

"I do not know now. Every day I prayed the good God will make her to die, but no! She lives, the viper, and I must run from her—far away as I can go." Félix squared his shoulders. "Listen, I will tell you how it comes that I marry her. She has a farm, a good farm, and my father wishes that I shall marry her and be rich. I say no, but I am only very young—she is old and ugly—and my father says I must and my mother cries that I am so stubborn. And so at last we are married. She hates me, she beats me, for that she loves another that she cannot have for he is married already and sometimes, I know it, she goes to meet him and when she comes back she is even worse than always. And at last I grow sick with fear of her and sometimes I hate her to want to kill her. So I run away to America and here I find my heart's love, my Carlotta, my sweet dove—" He took both her hands in his big grasp. "Now, let us get married." Slowly his gaze traveled over the faces before him. "Can I not then marry her?" he whispered. The priest shook his head.

"But she is mine—"

"I know, I know," Father Flaherty spoke hurriedly, his voice shaking. "But you cannot marry her now—nor live together again, Félix. The church and the laws of this land forbid you. Mary Ellen, woman, do you take this poor girl home with you and do for her as you would for your own daugh-

ter, and, James, come to see me to-morrow. I must think—I must think what to do—I am sorry—”

“As for my own dear daughter, Father,” sobbed Mary Ellen. “Let her come to me, the poor lamb. Come, Félix.”

Slowly Félix released Carlotta. “This country,” he murmured. “I thought it would be all right.” He pushed the girl into Mary Ellen’s arms, stood a moment gazing at Father Flaherty’s bowed figure, then simply and reverently pressed to his lips the hem of the priest’s black robe. Very quietly he followed the others out to the carriage.

* * *

The little white tenant house shone cheerily in the setting sun. The sleepy canary in his gilded cage on the west porch sat puffed up into a golden ball in the slight chill of coming twilight. But Félix did not notice him. He had had to explain to Carlotta, had seen her dear eyes grow wide with fear and her pudgy face turn white and suddenly old. The O’Hors had taken her along with them and she had gone without a word. She would not live without him, he knew it. But what to do—what to do! Money—there was plenty of it, hidden away in the closet with the little Marianne’s clothes. In Colorado, he had heard, were good places for sugar beets and there was a sister who would not betray him. But Carlotta, if she must stay here with those Americans—ah, well, they would be good to her. The woman had said, “Come up for your supper, Félix,” and she had kissed Carlotta’s forehead and her eyes were red. She had a good heart after all. And Monsieur—

“Félix,” Mr. O’Hora stood in the doorway, carefully balancing a covered basket on his hand. “Why ain’t you been after your supper. Must be all cold by this time, carrying it miles and miles through the country this way.”

He moved awkwardly about, finally setting the basket down on the floor with a determined thud. “Félix Ducocq,” he declared solemnly. “You’re a skunk, but I can see you don’t know

it and never did mean any harm. Just the same you should have knowed better.” He paused and gazed out of the window. “By the way, there’s a train out for Chicago at three of the morning. You’d better clear out. I’ll take care of your things until you want them. Eat your supper before it gets stone cold,” he concluded severely. “Good night.”

Half way to the gate he turned. “Carlotta sleeps in the north room to-night, I guess, the one just off the stoop,” he called back in a low tone. Then went on with the air of a man who has done a noble deed.

* * *

Mary Ellen O’Hora’s temper was bad all evening. She spanked all members of her household having a right to her attentions by reason of age and relationship, and scolded all the rest. Carlotta she undressed as if she were a child and put her in bed with a slight shake.

Returning to her own room, she found her husband smoking his smelliest pipe and resting his feet, with his shoes on, on the counterpane.

“James Richard O’Hora, will you take that dirty pipe out of here and your feet, too. Just look at my clean spread,” she scolded. “Oh, it’s work, work, work all the time in this house and never a bit of comfort do I take. And all the time being worried with things that ain’t none of my business—Och, Mary help us!” Mary Ellen burst into tears. “It makes me mad,” she wailed, “to hear her, the poor brainless thing, whispering to herself over there. It’s Félix, Félix, Félix, all the time—the sinful puppy. And her with the little ring we give her baby hanging on a string round her neck, and her a-kissing it and breaking her heart with longing for the little one lying out there beside our own only little daughter. Oh, James, my good man, it breaks my heart—”

“There, there, now, Ellen woman,” expostulated James, not daring to say more, knowing his wife to be a contrary woman. Mary Ellen finally quiet-

ed and rather inclined to laugh over her "bawling and yelling round like a moon-calf," he composed himself to sleep. She turned her back upon him. Gradually her occasional snuffles ceased and her breathing became quiet and regular. James Richard smiled contentedly and dozed off.

Through the quiet of the night came the sound of hoofs and wheels. James woke up. Before the side gate something had stopped. James lay perfectly still almost afraid to breathe lest Mary Ellen awake. Yes, that was Félix. And he had found Carlotta all right. Smart boy! But what a noise those two idiots did make with their whispering and Good Lord! was it kissing they were again! The soft things! Such hours as it did take Car-

lotta to dress and get out. At last! Murder! she fell over something in the path! The woman "skreeked" like a mouse. Gone at last!

The last faint sound of wheels had died away over the crest of the second hill. Mary Ellen sat up suddenly and looked out at the moonlit world. Then she looked at her husband suspiciously. "James Richard O'Hora," she said. James slept ostentatiously. "James Richard O'Hora," she repeated, wrath in her voice. "You are aiding and abetting in sin and I misdoubt if he had sense enough to bring along a warm wrap. Why didn't you get up and stop them?"

James turned an indignant eye upon her. "It was sleeping *I* was," he replied with dignity.



THE DISEMBODIED

By H. K.

INVISIBLE, yet real as air,—
 My instant foot is everywhere.
 The cold's sharp lash no more may sting
 Nor darkness bid me fold my wing.
 Earth's cumbrance of the five-fold sense
 Has opened to omniscience.
 Swifter than hope my foot can race
 Unto the other side of space,
 And I may see from where I stand
 God poise creation in His hand:
 Worlds flash and die like firefly-light,
 The shadow of His face their night;
 And now I glimpse His dawning smile
 Light up a bank of suns the while . .
 Call me not wretched nor a ghost—
 Here, beyond life, I live the most.



MOUNTAINS AND MOLEHILLS

By Edwin C. Dickenson

M'ALLISTER had lost many of the illusions at thirty that he possessed at twenty. He had decided that life being temporal, so was everything else. He reflected that new friends had been substituted for old, that old hobbies had given way for new, that money and business prosperity were things of fluctuating worth and retreated to others as he captured their first entrenchments.

But his greatest distaste with life and himself arose from the status of his affection for his wife. He wondered, now, at the fierceness of the passion that had once consumed him, wondered as though it had been a mild form of insanity. Theirs had been a romantic courtship. There had been family objections; a villain; a broken engagement and then a young Lochinvar out-of-the-West finale. That had been how many? Five years ago. And now—where was that great burning love that had once possessed him? Gone. In its place was an affection, a steady, domestic, comfortable affection. He liked to please her. He congratulated himself on her beauty when she appeared in an unusually handsome gown. He appreciated in a way her many devoted little attentions to him, and in a way showed it. But the Great Passion? The passion that made one see red and wish to kill, the passion that lifted to the heights of great sacrifice, that chilled the heart with fear—that was gone.

Once McAllister had said something of this sort to his wife. She had considered him with an expression of wonder and then hurt, and had proudly affirmed that her love for him was

greater than it ever had been. This made him feel a bit ashamed, it is true, but it did not alter his belief. He did not even believe her. Undoubtedly she believed it herself, but then, women were not given to self-analysis. Sometimes he wished he were not.

They had taken a cottage at the shore that summer. Agnes preferred the salt water to the mountains. As for him, it did not matter. He did not intend to take any vacation that year. Vacations were a bore and besides his business demanded his personal attention. Work, after all, was the great panacea of life. And Thurston, his physician, would take even that from him. "What you need is a complete rest. Get away from your business. Forget it. Live the simple life," and similar rot Thurston was continually throwing at him. The simple life was simple to the point of imbecility, he had retorted. His brain was clear enough to make money and his body able to carry it back and forth from office to home. That was enough.

But because of his wife's importunities he did agree to run down Friday evenings in the machine, it was only a matter of some two hours, and spend the week-ends. And having done that he thought he had made quite concession enough.

The season ran on into mid-summer. Religiously every Friday evening McAllister left his office at four and pulled up before the cottage in time for dinner. As regularly every Monday morning he left the cottage at seven and pulled up before his office at nine. And as surely on every morning of the week that he opened his mail at the office he

found a slim envelope addressed in the fine, regular hand of his wife. She had never much to say. Nothing much happened down there that would interest him. But her letters were her bright "Good morning" to him, and he always opened them before his other letters, no matter how important these might be.

One morning her letter was not in his mail. It was on Tuesday. She had waved to him from the cottage veranda as he had set out the previous morning. He could hardly believe that she were ill. She radiated health and cheerfulness. It was doubtless the mails or she had forgotten—no, it might be the mails, but he could not believe she had forgotten. It annoyed him. He caught himself skimming through his other correspondence without sensing it, and with an effort concentrated his mind on what he was about.

He had a case on trial that day and always, through the pleadings, during the examination of witnesses, even in the arguments, there was something at the back of his head that said that things were not as they should be. When court had adjourned he returned to his office—and oddly enough on his way across the city, up the elevator, down the corridor his one thought was that surely her letter would be waiting for him.

And it was not. Perhaps she had inadvertently addressed it to the house. He left his office at once for home. And it was not there. He ate his dinner alone. Why had he let her go to the shore anyway? A woman's place was with her husband. He remembered once her mother had said that she and Agnes' father had not been separated twenty-four hours in as many years. How much cozier, how much more comfortable would he have been had she been sitting across from him now!

After dinner he went to the library and tried to bury himself in a book. It was the same there. Night after night she had sat near him, embroider-

ing as he read. Sometimes they would scarcely exchange a dozen words in an evening. Yet—he knew she was there. He was always conscious of her presence. And now her absence was borne in upon him with increasing persistence. And why? Because she had failed, once, to write him.

He got to his feet and nervously strode up and down the length of the library. Why had he not had a telephone put in the cottage. She had suggested it and he had laughed at it as a needless expense. Needless expense! What if it were a matter of life and death? Suppose she were seriously ill? That there had been an automobile accident or a capsized boat. *What if the house should be forever empty of her!*

He halted abruptly in his nervous pacing and took out his watch. It was ten o'clock. He could be down there by twelve—if he were foolish enough to give way to his fears. Impulsive action was something long unknown to him. But—Agnes was all he had. Without her—

He threw on a coat and ran to the garage. A minute later he was in his car speeding across the city.

* * *

McAllister remembered little of that ride. Eyes and hands mechanically guided the big car through crowded streets into the black-walled country roads, while ever his seething brain said "she is hurt," "she is ill," "she needs me." And behind it all the great bitterness of the knowledge that he had doubted the very existence of a love for his wife. Ah, if God granted to him that she were safe and well never would he question it again.

Once free of the city he swept on like the angel of death, the great searchlights boring into the night ahead. Dropping down hills with the swiftness of a falling body, lurching around curves on two wheels he sped on as one possessed. Once he roared across a hidden railroad crossing and a cyclopean eye glared balefully at him, an iron-lunged monster shrieked demoniacally

at him. He felt the jar of a slight impact as the huge engine thundered behind him. But he was across and safe and his tired brain took up again its old worry.

Sometime later he pulled up before the cottage. It was dark. With stiffened lines he strode up the path. A switch was snapped on, the door opened and framed in it he saw the slender, white-robed form of his wife.

"Walter, what is the matter?" she was asking.

He stood dumbly before her.

"Why—did—you—not—write?" he asked, tonelessly.

"I did. I gave it to John to mail and he forgot it."

"Oh," said McAllister.

His wife put her hands on his shoulders, considering him with curious intentness.

"And you came down to-night because of that?"

"Yes."

"Why you—you dear!" And her arms went about his neck. He clung to her as if fearful if he let go she would vanish.



LOVE'S NEED

By Clinton Scollard

LOVE, I need thy heartening
When the year is at the spring,
And by greening height and shore
Kingcups show their golden ore.

Love, I need thy heartening
When the butterfly's a-wing,
And while roses spill their musk
Firefly torches dot the dusk.

Love, I need thy heartening
When the flutes of autumn fling
Mellow calls from hill to hill,—
"Whip-poor-will, oh, whip-poor-will!"

Love, I need thy heartening
When the north winds flail and sting,
And the lake's chill bosom lies
Steel-blue under frosty skies.

Time of rose, or time of snows,
Sowing time or garnering,
Dawn of day, or twilight's close,
Love, I need thy heartening!



A CLEVER girl is simply one who voluntarily stops loving you.

A CAREFUL SURGEON

By William Caine

I
SUDDENLY the telephone bell rang. That rising surgeon, Hugh Probyn, frowned as he laid down the scalpel on which he had been busy. It always annoyed him to be interrupted on a Saturday night, for it was then that he always cleaned his instruments. For years he had never failed in this duty. His immense reputation—that of the most careful if not the most brilliant operator in London—was the result. He had, for instance, during nearly a quarter of a century lost no more than 502 patients from blood poisoning, and things like that tell. Sufferers who placed themselves in Probyn's hands did so with complete confidence if they could.

He sterilized the receiver and put it to his ear. "Hullo?" he said in the suave professional voice with which he always began a conversation upon the instrument. "Yes? Are you there?"

"Is this Probyn?" he heard.

"Yes," he said, smiling pleasantly, "is that you, Adamson?" He had recognized the voice of a colleague.

"No," said his correspondent. "It's O'Massey. Are you busy?"

"Nothing that I can't put off for you, dear boy." O'Massey sent him more healthy appendixes to remove than any practitioner in the West End.

"Good," said the voice. "I'm here with a patient who's got a stomach ache. Of course, I've prescribed immediate short-circuiting. He's very rich and his wife and he aspire to be fashionable, so they've made no difficulty whatever about the operation. I've told him that there's hardly a Peeress that you haven't had a chip at

and they're wild to get you. They'll pay anything we choose to say."

"I'll come at once," said Probyn. "Good-bye." He hung up the receiver and set about packing a bag with saws and other things which would be necessary. Again the telephone bell rang.

"Is this Probyn?" he was again asked.

He nodded and the question was repeated. This irritated him and he asked what the devil was the matter?

"I just wanted," said the telephone, "to tell you that they've sent their car for you. It's on the way now and it'll be at your place in five minutes. So don't have your own out for your man would never find the way here."

"Where is it?" asked Probyn. This reflection upon his chauffeur's knowledge of London did not please him, for he himself had trained the boy and was confident in his ability to find his way, with time and assistance, anywhere.

"St. John's Wood," came the reply, "but their car'll fetch you. Bring your instruments, please. So long."

"Hullo," cried Probyn. "Hullo. Hullo!" He wished to tell O'Massey, sharply enough, that he had intended to bring his instruments, but silence alone met his every attempt to do so. Unwilling, however, to forego his repartee he continued to bellow into the mouthpiece until a female voice asked him if they had answered yet, and on his saying "No" there came a wail of "541 Peckham" and immediately afterwards an intermittent buzzing sound. Clearly O'Massey's reproof must wait.

All this had consumed some little time and Probyn had barely done blaspheming when his butler entered to

announce the arrival of a car for him. Probyn hastily thrust some antiseptic gauze into his pocket, clutched his bag of tools and hurried out. The call of duty always found him alert.

A moment later he was in the car. A moment later it had glided away.

II

THAT he was concerned with a wealthy patient was made manifest by one glance around the interior of the vehicle in which he now found himself. The cushions were of white Russian leather; the clock was of gold, the flower-vase, the cigar box, the match stand, the book-rest, the phonograph, and all the other ordinary appointments of the same precious metal. All were incrustated with gems. The cigars were in glass tubes and the matches were made of sandal wood. In the bookshelf were *Cordingley's Guide to the Stock Exchange*, *The Life of J. D. Rockefeller*, *Dyspepsia, Its Treatment and Cure*, *Manners for Men* and other standard works of the plutocrats' library. They were all *editions de luxe* and first impressions.

Probyn, while the car sped northwards through the night, busied himself with calculations relating to the amount of the fee which he would be justified in demanding. He gave no heed to where he was going.

Presently the car stopped before a grilled gate in a quiet tree-shaded road. Evidently the surgeon was anxiously expected for this gate immediately opened and a respectable looking man in the evening costume of a butler or a millionaire came out. He unfastened the door of the car and said, "Mr. Probyn, I presume. Dr. O'Massey is quite ready for you, sir."

Probyn sprang out of the car. "Good," he cried, "lead on. I am eager to be at work." The near presence of disease to combat always affected Probyn strongly, and now his nostrils were dilated, his eyes burned and his lips were drawn slightly back, showing the teeth. He looked every inch a surgeon.

He pushed the gate and went through it. He was in a dark, shady garden. Palely the path shone that led to the steps of the house. Absolute quiet was over all.

It was broken by the voice of the butler, who stood at his elbow.

"Shall you want this bag, sir?" he asked.

Probyn snatched the thing and bounded up the steps and through the door.

Instantly strong arms gripped him from behind, a sack fell over his shoulders to the floor, something was forced into his mouth, his ankles were tightly constricted and he was thrown violently upon his back.

It was only now that he began to have the suspicion that he was the victim of foul play.

But why? But why?

If there was still justice in England O'Massey should pay for this.

He lost consciousness.

III

WHEN Probyn came to himself he sat in a chair. The sack had been removed (where it had been taken I cannot say), but the gag was still in place. His hands were tied behind him. His ankles were roped together, also his knees. A cord, passed round his elbows, bound him firmly to his seat. To its top his head was attached by means of a bandage which encircled his neck, threatening strangulation. Otherwise he enjoyed complete freedom.

The room in which he sat was a small one, scantily furnished. Indeed but for his own chair and a text on one wall there was nothing which could be regarded as an embellishment to the chamber. It had no windows and but one door. A French farce could never have got on at all in it. One would have said, "A cellar."

In front of Probyn stood a solitary man, in his hand he held a lamp whose soft radiance proclaimed it to be charged with the oil of the colza bean. But for Probyn he was absolutely alone.

His face was large and heavy. His nose was exuberant, though not after the Israelitish manner; it was one of those rocky prominences which declare an aptitude for the amalgamation of American railroads, the astute shepherding to the poll of countless Lithuanians, the sudden cornering of chewing gum. The mouth was moulded upon the vigorous lines of the now-obsolete man-trap. The ears projected sharply outwards from the skull and twitched slowly in a manner which proclaimed their possessor a man of immense nervous energy. The head was leonine and quite bald.

Probyn wondered who he could be.

Next moment he was convinced that before him stood the author of the outrage which had been practised upon him, for the man had spoken.

"I expect, Mr. Probyn," he said, "you will be wondering why I have done this to you." He was clearly an American.

Probyn, unable by reason of his neck binding to nod, did the next best thing. He shook his head rapidly.

"Then," said the other, "I will tell you. It was because I feared lest you might hastily reject the proposal which I wish to make to you unless you were to be brought to listen to the whole of it. It is a very simple one, at any rate to a surgeon of your reputed skill. I just want you to cut off some hands for me."

Another man might have been horrified at this request, uttered as it was in a perfectly commonplace way. Probyn did not even shudder, though his bonds would probably have permitted him to do it slightly. He only wondered why this person should have supposed that he would be unwilling to oblige him.

"I don't want you to complain afterwards that you have been called upon to act without full knowledge," the man with the lamp continued, forgetting apparently for the moment that he was addressing a surgeon, "so let me tell you a story."

He put the lamp on the floor, sat down beside it, lit a cigar and began without more ado.

"You must know," he said, "that for sometime ago I was suffering from appendicitis of a very disagreeable kind. I consulted Sir Hackney Gore, who advised an operation. This he performed with, as he declared, perfect success. I spent several weeks in his private nursing home and some months at his own convalescent hotel at Broadstairs. My wound healed capitally but the pains persisted. I returned to Sir Hackney, who told me that I dreamed. It was impossible for me to feel any pain. He, however, suggested that to put all things beyond a shadow of doubt he should operate again. This I declined for I had had enough of Gore. I obtained the next name on the list of surgeons which hangs in the library of our Embassy. It was that of Sir Sheffield Carver—I sought his advice. He informed me that Gore was a bungler of the most dangerous kind and urged me to allow him to open me up. I consented and a second operation was performed. Carver, to his delight, discovered that his precursor had omitted to remove a sponge. Here it is."

The victim of surgery drew from his pocket an object which Probyn had no difficulty in recognizing. It was a surgical sponge, about the size and shape of a Rugby football. Probyn laughed aloud. No surgeon, however serious his position, could fail to be amused at such an oversight.

Laying the sponge on the floor beside him, the other continued placidly. "I spent two months in Carver's private nursing establishment and nearly a year at Herne Bay, where, as you probably know, his recuperative institution is to be found. Every week Carver assured me that the agonizing symptoms which I experienced were attributable solely to my imagination. At last he said that, if only to convince me, he would consent to operate again.

"Upon that I left Herne Bay and came up to London. The next name on our list at the Embassy was that of Sir Marigold Hash. I brought my troubles to him and after listening to some very

uncomplimentary expressions relating to Gore and Carver I was told that an immediate operation was imperative. I put myself in the hands of Sir Marigold, who operated that evening and unburied a forceps which was engraved with Carver's initials. He told me later on that he could hardly sew me up for laughing. This is it." He produced a charming little forceps from somewhere and laid it on the sponge. Then he proceeded with his story.

"Hash," he said, "drove me round to his private hospital at once and left me there in charge of his nurses for a year. I then became an inmate of the Sanatorium Quisisana, Ltd., at Hastings, of which he is the managing director, and have been there almost ever since, that is to say, a little over eighteen months.

"A week ago he informed me that my continued symptoms of distress in the abdominal region were certainly all moonshine, but that if I insisted upon it he would be very pleased to have another look within.

"I need hardly tell you that you are fourth on our Embassy list; I trust that I do not need to explain more fully what I want of you. I am really getting a little tired of detailing my troubles to you gentlemen and I cannot think that anything I might say would affect your judgment of my case in the slightest degree. I simply ask you to remove whatever it is that Sir Marigold Hash has left inside me. But I cannot go either to your nursing home or your convalescent place. I am a busy man. Immense interests in both America and Europe are confided to my guidance, and I cannot afford any more time to this thing. I will now remove your gag for a moment and, though I may tell you that we are fifty feet underground, I may also tell you that if you raise your voice above the tones of ordinary conversation it will be your death warrant."

So saying this redoubtable person unfastened the knots which secured the gag in its place and Probyn was free to use his tongue again.

"But why," he said in a whisper, for he had no means of judging his companion's standard for the tones of ordinary conversation; "why did you go to all this trouble to knock me down and tie me up? My dear sir, it can only be a pleasure to me to let a little lamp-light into you."

"You forget," said the other, "that I spoke about some hands I wanted amputated."

"So you did," said Probyn. "Your extremely entertaining narrative must have caused me to forget that. Well?"

"I have in the next room," was the reply, "Sir Hackney Gore, Sir Sheffield Carver and Sir Marigold Hash. It is their hands that I want. Their right hands. They have done enough damage and I mean to stop them."

"But," said Probyn, "I shall be delighted. They are my most—in fact, my only serious—rivals—Gore is the most experienced, Carver the most audacious, Hash the most imaginative surgeon in London. I am only the most careful. It will be fine to get those fellows out of my way. Shall we go in and do it now?"

"But," said his captor, "do you feel no compunction whatever about this business?"

"My dear fellow!" said Probyn. "You are talking to a surgeon. I'll do them for you at fifty guineas a time or say, as there are three of them, a hundred and fifty pounds for the lot."

The other man clapped his hands and twenty black mutes filed into the room. At a sign they unfastened Probyn, who rose, stretched his arms to promote the circulation of the blood and vowed that he never felt more like it in his life.

IV

"And now," said the organizer of this vengeance, when all was over and the last of Probyn's rivals had been removed, "it only remains for you to deal with me. My pains are as bad as they have ever been in my life and I mean to have this thing settled prop-

erly. My business will go to pieces if I don't get back to it soon."

"I should have thought," said Probyn, "that you would be better advised to flee. Those three gentlemen will do their best to make it unpleasant for you. Personally I would rather be on a Cunarder at this moment, if I were you, than preparing to take an anesthetic, be cut up and go to bed for a month."

"There is nothing to fear," said the other. "My plans were well laid. None of those left-handed imbeciles know where they have been. They were all kidnapped skilfully and without leaving a clue. They will all wake up in different cellars in different parts of London. They will have nothing to go upon whatever. They have been blind and deaf and chloroformed ever since they first fell into the hands of my minions."

"You relieve me immensely," said Probyn, who during his own last speech had suddenly realized that he, too, might be going to find himself in a difficult position. "If you'll send out one of your men for a bottle of chloroform," he added, as he rolled up his sleeves, "we can get to work at once."

V

The patient opened his eyes.
"Well?" he demanded.

Probyn paused in the washing of his hands. "Excellent," he said. "Absolutely successful. I didn't have to keep you more than seven hours under the anesthetic. I have never done a smarter bit of work. But my hand was in, you see. Hah! Hah! My hand was certainly in."

"Then there will be no more trouble?"

"Absolutely none. You are now a sound, healthy man." Probyn always said this.

"And Hash?" said the patient, "what did *he* leave in? A knife, I suppose."

"Oh, no," said Probyn, "he left this. I'll put it with the other things. And now as there's nothing to keep me here I'll bid you good night. The nurses I telephoned for are both here and I'll look in in the morning."

"But what *did* Hash leave in?" demanded the patient querulously. He was still a little weak.

"Only this," said Probyn. He took a small object from the mantelpiece, approached the sponge and forceps which lay on the dressing-table, and deposited what he held by their side.

"Yes," cried the patient, "but what is it?"

"Your appendix," said Probyn, carefulest of surgeons.



THERE is no such thing as love. There is only the disease of believing that it exists.



EXIT the roller-towel. Enter the individual drinking-cup. Hygiene makes steady progress. The end, perhaps, will be a law penalizing the laborious Italian for spitting on his hands.



THERE is a limit to all things. Not even a widow enjoys being made love to at breakfast.

THE REASON

By Arthur Wallace Peach

NOT orchids of prismatic bloom,
Lighting the marsh's murky gloom
With torches bright;
Not roses of the rainbow's hues,
Kissed by still evening's crystal dew,
Are my delight.

I love the daisy, shy and sweet,
Prim little maiden, always neat
In rain or sun;
And by the wistful violet,
Wherever its meek face is met,
My heart is won.

Why do I deem these flowers fair
Who but a humble beauty share
And nothing more?
A mother loves the daisy shy,
A sweetheart, violets; and I—
I love all four!



VANITY is at the bottom of a good deal of morality. A vain man is one who likes to be thought capable of doing things that no man could actually do.



NOT many of us actually plan to commit suicide, but it is nevertheless pleasant to know that the possibility of it is always around the corner.



DEFINITION of a good mother: one who loves her child as much as the little girl loves her doll.



PERHAPS men would trust women a good deal more if women themselves trusted them more.

THE MORAL DEFEAT

By Alexander Harvey

ROGERS seized me by the throat the moment I had told him that his wife was faithless.

"Liar!" He fairly shouted the word. "My Alice is as true as steel."

How I gasped in that strangling hold! The agony from which he made me suffer transformed his rage into a swift compassion. He freed me with such quickness that I collapsed upon the great sofa against which he had forced me.

"Forgive me, Douglas!" He was kneeling beside the couch on which I now lay prone and helpless, striving impotently for breath. "Our talk tonight has been too terrible."

His lips, flushed and quivering from the fierceness of the mood induced by the revelation I had made, proved incapable of framing further utterance. The masses of his blond hair teemed with perspiration. The very hands in which he buried his eyes were moistened with what I took for tears. I sat up instantly and touched him on the shoulder. It was a familiar gesture, dating from the time of our boyish intimacy at school.

"I hesitated long before I told you. Further concealment would have been an act of treason."

Never had I dreamed the truth would overwhelm him in this fashion. How heartily I cursed now the misfortune that had made me a guest under my friend's roof. I had never seen this wife of his until a month before. Alice Rogers was the daughter of one of our mightiest coal barons. The news of her engagement to my chum did not reach me until the eve of the wedding, when I was concluding in South Amer-

ica those observations of a solar eclipse which nearly cost me my life. The first friend to hail me on the pier, as I set foot in New York, was Rogers himself. I had been conveyed at once with my man servant to his beautiful home on the Hudson.

I little heeded the rhapsodies of my friend on the subject of his bride. I was face to face with Alice Rogers amid the splendors of the household she adorned before I understood her fascination. The inexpressible distinction of the tall form, the incessant light flashed over the oval countenance by an emanation from radiant eyes and the appeal of every gesture accompanying the tones of a thrilling voice vanquished me altogether. I had to stand before her speechless as Rogers spoke the words of praise that introduced me. The personality of this woman was even more commanding than her beauty. It was feminine in a rarely poetical fashion, compounded of the temperament of an ancient queen with the sweetness of some medieval nun and a suggestion of an ambition to rule her world that made me think of Lady Macbeth.

How am I ever to forget the brilliance with which she exploited these rare attributes at our dinner that night? We were quite a company, I found. Rogers had asked some great people from the city to listen to the tale of my adventure in the tropics. Why my attention was directed chiefly to Mackley I could not tell. He was an artist, I learned. He had come down for the summer to sketch. His days were passed chiefly in the woods, it appeared. He had a tiny cottage on

the great estate that went to Rogers with his bride.

The sight of my friend's wife in this artist's arms as they lingered together in the conservatory after dinner on that night of all nights had placed the guilty woman at my mercy.

I meant at first to hold my tongue. The stories brought me from day to day by the garrulous old man servant, whose fidelity in many climes entitled him to talk freely, shook my purpose somewhat. Joseph, as he shaved my chin, retailed the gossip he had picked up in the kitchen. It compromised my friend's wife with the artist cruelly. She had been to his studio at the cottage once or twice to sit for her portrait. Things said and done there were agitating the maids and chauffeurs. I had at last to order Joseph to impart no more details to me. I resolved to give Rogers a hint that he remove his wife from the influence of the artist at once.

Thus had it come about that my dearest friend was denouncing me as a liar to my face. My purpose was originally to convey no more than a delicate hint. This intention was frustrated by the fury with which he received my first awkward suggestion and dragged the truth from me by degrees. How bitterly I regretted the indiscretion of which I had been guilty, as his pale, distorted face was turned to mine in response to my familiar touch upon his shoulder.

"You hinted, Douglas," began Rogers, his self-command restored, "at some convincing evidence."

I had learned through the babblings of old Joseph that a meeting of the guilty pair was to take place within the hour. He had his information from a chauffeur, who had it from a maid. Mrs. Rogers was to visit the studio ostensibly for a critical inspection of the progress Mackley had made with his background. The portrait itself was not quite completed. Mrs. Rogers had planned to keep all sight of it from her husband until the very last stroke of the brush. There was nothing sin-

ister on the face of it in the meeting between herself and Mackley of which I was now determined to make the husband a witness.

"You shall see them together," I assured my friend. "Can you control yourself?"

I saw his eyes glitter. He approached the window of the smoking room and gazed silently out upon the interminable lawns.

"If," I urged, "you intend anything rash—"

I saw him put a hand to a pocket.

"I have no weapon," he assured me. "If there is guilt in her heart, what I say to Alice will prove all the revenge I want."

I was so satisfied with the look in his eyes as he spoke that I led him without a word from the house. I sought by the deliberation of my movement to give our excursion the aspect of an aimless stroll. The gardeners were still busy with their roses although the sun was on the brink of its setting when we struck into a copse on the confines of the estate. I must have lost my way altogether, so vast was this domain, but for the familiarity of my friend with every winding lane. He had spent many a happy hour among these trees with the very woman whose guilt he had come here to verify and denounce. He addressed a sudden word of caution to me as we came near the cottage.

"Mackley is living there. Can you see him?"

I dropped on my hands and knees instantly to peer above a hedge. No human being was anywhere about. I had feared the presence of one of the servants or of a dog to give the alarm. Rogers, who obeyed my slightest signal, stole after me through the trees. I was not surprised at the isolated and deserted air of the rustic edifice before which we had arrived. The lovers must wish above everything else to be alone.

Deep as were the descending shades of this warm evening, I could see no light gleaming from the tiny windows.

I had conducted Rogers to a door in the rear.

"Take off your shoes."

He grasped my meaning at once. We stood in stocking feet beneath an arbor heavy with ripe grapes. I heard the musical murmur that delighted me whenever Mrs. Rogers spoke. There was a deeper whisper in response. I thought I detected the contact of lips. The husband trembled and clutched my arm.

It was an easy matter to invade the cottage through an open window. My impulse to creep on hands and knees towards a room beyond was checked by the sound of her rare voice.

"I must go on to the end," Mrs. Rogers was saying. "I must make the supreme surrender."

The reply of the lover was in tones too low for my ear. I turned instinctively to look into the face of my friend. He was kneeling beside a chair with his head in his hands.

"Everything! I shall give up friends, home, husband, rather than lose the love that is more than all these."

Her voice again! Moving as were these words in their revelation of a soul determined to abandon itself utterly, they wrought upon me a spell less potent than that of the woman's voice. I felt an instant sympathy with the splendid mood uttering itself in tones so harmonized with the theme. She framed another sentence in reply to the man, who, as I now divined, held her in a close embrace, and when I caught her meaning I would have given worlds to be in Mackley's place. A wild purpose to drag my friend from this scene led me actually to lay one hand upon his shoulder in that old way of ours at school. He stared at me and made no sign.

"I care much for the world," was her next avowal. "But I care more for love than for the world."

Once more those lips met although how I knew I cannot to this day explain. She was revealing to the object of her infatuation the completeness of the conquest he had made from the

moment of their first encounter. Her voice, seeming literally to ride on the flood of twilight rising everywhere about us, had caught the fever of the passion it expressed until I lay bathed in ecstasies. She spoke of an eternal mingling of their souls and moved in his embrace until their lips made music. I stood in the darkness, incapable of movement, my ear absorbing every syllable of her confession before I heard the swift bound of my friend from my side. He had rushed through the shadows investing us and was crying some incoherent imprecation in his wife's ear. The spell had been broken and I rushed after him into the adjoining room.

"Alice!" Rogers was addressing the wife whom he confronted in the light afforded by the rising moon. "Alice!"

Mrs. Rogers was still in the half recumbent position upon a mass of rugs from which this apparition of her husband had aroused her. Mackley was standing behind a chair in the remotest corner of the studio. A canvas had been dashed from an easel to the floor. This was the famous portrait.

For a full minute after I had emerged from my place of concealment, Mrs. Rogers, totally unprepared for our interruption, stared at us in amazement so blank that she found no words for her husband. She stood up at last in the light of the moon slowly, gracefully, every line of her perfect figure conveying her sense of outrage.

"And how long," she asked with an inexpressible majesty, "have you been concealed here?"

The scorn with which her gesture emphasized her words made my cheeks burn. She was conveying to me an idea of the indelicacy of the transgression she imputed, a sense of my own lack of refinement.

"You permitted yourself," she resumed in a voice that lost no sweetness from its indignation, "to overhear the exposure of a woman's soul to the man she loves?"

I had never realized until that moment even the possibility of such a sac-

rilege in the confessional of love. How gross seemed my lack of spirituality in the light of her attitude to it! For there was in her question an absolute contempt for my display of bad taste at which I quailed before her. My heart had been filled with compassion for this woman when, a moment or two before, I sped after her husband here to witness her confusion and despair. How subtly the tables were turned upon me now! I was as one coming to scoff who remained in a sanctuary to pray. I stared at her dumbly, conscious of the flood of light let in upon my mind by the point of view from which she spoke, yet scarcely realizing the full purport of her revelation. She saw my bewilderment and added a word of elucidation.

"No gentleman," she remarked simply, and with an evident purpose to spare my feelings at which I winced, "will permit the baring of a woman's heart in his hearing unless it be intended for himself."

I strove vainly to put into words my appreciation of the truth she uttered. I was too conscious of having been deficient in delicacy to be able to frame an apology even in stammers.

"You are very young," she conceded with as much kindness as before. "A comprehension of the sanctity of love comes, I know, from experience as much as from instinct."

"I wanted to help my friend."

It was my only excuse. She robbed it of all validity with an observation that was crushing because of her inimitable attitude.

"You could have helped him sufficiently by breaking in upon us before you had heard what a woman cares to have heard only by the man she loves."

"He is my friend," Rogers interjected himself here. I had forgotten his very existence. "He did not move until I gave the signal, and I wanted his evidence to be conclusive in any court."

"I have no quarrel with you for satisfying yourself that I love another," she explained with a supreme scorn, "but I cannot forgive the indelicacy that permitted you to conceal your presence so long. The rules of evidence require no profanation of the sanctuary of a woman's heart."

He stood before her apologetically, as crestfallen as myself. Mackley, I noticed now, had withdrawn. A consciousness of being further humiliated as I contrasted his delicacy in withdrawing with my lack of it in eavesdropping found expression in the look I exchanged with Rogers. She stood between us in all the grandeur of the patrician crushing the low born with a display of better breeding. I had never before seen an exemplification of that moral power through the medium of which the lady triumphs over him who forgets what is her due.

"Madam," I began humbly, "I—"

"We shall meet again," she interrupted, extending a hand to me with a smile, "after the divorce."

And with a perfect pride she bowed her husband and myself out into the night.



LOVE is a game in which men play for the fun of it and women for the prize. Both usually lose.



THERE are many men who are too wise to rock a row-boat or monkey with an unloaded revolver, and yet most of them will kiss a woman.

A TALE OF LONDON

By Lord Dunsany

"COME," said the sultan to his hasheesh-eater in the very furthest lands that know Bagdad, "dream to me now of London."

And the hasheesh-eater made a low obeisance and seated himself cross-legged upon a purple cushion brodered with golden poppies on the floor, beside an ivory bowl where the hasheesh was, and having eaten liberally of the hash-eesh, blinked seven times and spoke thus:

"O Friend of God, know then that London is the desiderate town even of all earth's cities. Its houses are of ebony and cedar which they roof with thin copper plates that the hand of Time turns green. They have golden balconies in which amethysts are where they sit and watch the sunset. Musicians in the gloaming steal softly along the ways; unheard their feet fall on the white sea-sand with which those ways are strewn, and in the darkness suddenly they play on dulcimers and instruments with strings. Then are there murmurs in the balconies praising their skill, then are there bracelets cast down to them for reward and golden necklaces and even pearls.

"Indeed but the city is fair; there is by the sandy ways a paving all alabaster, and the lanterns along it are of chrysoprase, all night long they shine green, but of amethyst are the lanterns of the balconies.

"As the musicians go along the ways dancers gather about them and dance upon the alabaster pavings, for joy and not for hire. Sometimes a window opens far up in an ebony palace and a wreath is cast down to a dancer or orichids showered upon them.

"Indeed of many cities have I dreamed but of none fairer, through many marble metropolitan gates hasheesh has led me, but London is its secret, the last gate of all; the ivory bowl has nothing more to show. And indeed even now the imps that crawl behind me and that will not let me be are plucking me by the elbow and bidding my spirit return for well they know that I have seen too much. 'No, not London,' they say; and, therefore, I will speak of some other city, a city of some less mysterious land and anger not the imps with forbidden things. I will speak of Persepolis or famous Thebes."

A shade of annoyance crossed the sultan's face, a look of thunder that you had scarcely seen, but in those lands they watched his visage well, and, though his spirit was wandering far away and his eyes were bleared with hasheesh, that story-teller, there and then, perceived the look that was death and sent his spirit back at once to London as a man runs into his house when the thunder comes.

"And, therefore," he continued, "in the desiderate city, in London, all their camels are pure white. Remarkable is the swiftness of their horses that draw their chariots that are of ivory along those sandy ways and that are of surpassing lightness; they have little bells of silver upon their horses' heads. O Friend of God, if you perceived their merchants! The glory of their dresses in the noonday! They are no less gorgeous than those butterflies that float about their streets. They have overcloaks of green and vestments of azure, huge purple flowers blaze on their overcloaks, the work of cunning needles, the

centers of the flowers are of gold and the petals of purple. All their hats are black." ("No, no," said the sultan.) "But irises are set about the brims and green plumes float above the crowns of them."

"They have a river that is named the Thames; on it their ships go up with violet sails, bringing incense for the braziers that perfume the streets; new songs exchanged for gold with alien tribes, raw silver for the statues of their heroes, gold to make balconies where their women sit, great sapphires to reward their poets with, the secrets of old cities and strange lands, the learning of the dwellers in far isles, emeralds, diamonds and the hoards of the sea. And whenever a ship comes into port and furls its violet sails and the news spreads through London that she has come, then all the merchants go down to the river to barter, and all day long the chariots whirl through the streets, and the sound of their going is a mighty roar all day until evening, their roar is even like. . . ."

"Not so," said the sultan.

"Truth is not hidden from the Friend of God," replied the hasheesh-eater, "I have erred, being drunken with hasheesh, for in the desiderate city, even in London, so thick upon the ways is the white sea-sand with which the city glimmers that no sound comes from the path of the charioteers, but they go softly like a light sea-wind." ("It is well," said the sultan.) "They go softly down to the port where the vessels are, and the merchandise in from sea, amongst the wonders that the sailors show, on land by the high ships, and softly they go, though swiftly, at evening back to their homes."

"O would that the Munificent, the Illustrious, the Friend of God had even

seen these things, had seen the jewelers with their empty baskets bargaining there by the ships, when the barrels of emeralds came up from the hold. Or would that he had seen the fountains there in silver basins in the midst of the ways. I have seen small spires upon their ebony houses and the spires were all of gold, birds strutted there upon the copper roofs from golden spire to spire that have no equal for splendor in all the woods of the world. And over London, the desiderate city, the sky is so deep a blue that by this alone the traveler may know where he has come, and may end his fortunate journey. Nor yet for any color of the sky is there too great heat in London, for along its ways a wind blows always from the South gently and cools the city.

"Such, O Friend of God, is indeed the city of London, lying very far off on the yonder side of Bagdad, without a peer for beauty or excellence of its ways among all the towns of the earth or cities of song; and even so as I have told its fortunate citizens dwell, with their hearts ever devising beautiful things and from the beauty of their own fair work that is more abundant around them every year, receiving new inspirations to work things more beautiful yet."

"And is their government good?" the sultan said.

"It is most good," said the hasheesh-eater, and fell backwards upon the floor.

He lay thus and was silent. And when the sultan perceived he would speak no more that night he smiled and lightly applauded.

And there was envy in that palace, in lands beyond Bagdad, of all that dwell in London.



IT is easy enough to do one's duty—but what a hard job to enjoy it!

THE FLIGHT

By Maurice Samuel

ETHELBERTA was not like the others. She had little dreams of her own, plans, aspirations: her world was not restricted to the floors she scrubbed, the walls she dusted and the knobs she polished, for Providence had endowed her with a vague sense of the infinite possibilities of life. She had in her a rudimentary touch of refinement, and her soul responded with magnetic sensibility when she saw how her mistress drank a cup of coffee, with little finger delicately poised, aloft and aloof, or when she entered the drawing-room in the twilight to switch on the lights, or when she heard master waking immemorial music from the piano.

She had her moods of melancholy like any poet; and she loved then to sit at her little window, and look, of an autumn evening, across the gray-glooming tiles on the other side of the river, aglow for her with the fairy light of romance—no, not of romance, for she knew not what that was, but something warm and golden, a hope, a fear, representative of that which was entirely beyond her.

But most she loved to hear her master and her mistress at their quarrels. She would thrill with a realization of the loftiness of this world of theirs when she paused by the door and heard from behind it the slow smooth voice of the master, instinct with scorn, and the thin, clear voice of Madame, at one moment whittled down to a shocking acidity, at another melting into tearful pathos. Ethelberta had witnessed many varieties of quarrels, for she had spent her youth in surroundings particularly conducive to the study of this

form of human intercourse. Quarrels had been for her of three varieties, according to their climaxes: those which ended in the belligerents resorting to the public house, to swear, among other things, less ideal, eternal brotherhood: those which ended, like some of the first, but for other reasons, in the gutter: and those which ended in the police station. But never, till Monsieur and Madame d'Orléans had taken her into their employ, had she witnessed this variety of quarrel—a quarrel without drink, without raised voices, and without fisticuffs—a quarrel which ended merely in the hurried but quiet exit of one or both of the parties.

At first she did not guess that they were quarreling, for they used a variety of English which was beyond her, but something in the cold, level delivery of Monsieur, and in the swift, clear enunciation of Madame, made her suspicious. Her suspicions were confirmed when she saw Monsieur emerge with a white face, to be followed by Madame with a face all crimson. She felt instinctively that only in the very loftiest circles did husband and wife quarrel with such restraint and refinement.

Ethelberta herself was eager to get through life with a minimum of quarreling. She and William never quarreled, and those occasions when remonstrations had risen at all above a dignified gentleness had been followed quickly by heartfelt contrition. William was a quiet young man: he delivered meat quietly, brought accounts quietly, and as a wooer was almost painfully silent. He would ask, in subdued fashion, when she was "coming

out next," and when his strictly formal advance met with a snub, which happened rarely, he betook himself about his business with a quiet acceptance of fate. Next to having the impossible young man of her dreams, Ethelberta was convinced that William was the best; for he intruded little on her thoughts, and, with her arm through his, she could imagine whatever she pleased.

She seldom spoke to William about Monsieur and Madame d'Orléans. She felt without understanding that these two worlds, the world of her employers and the world of William, would not thrive in contact with each other. She felt, too, that she lacked the power to make him understand what wonderful people they were, what sounds and scents they moved among, what an exalted language they spoke, what a stately life they lived. She never could make out completely what Monsieur would say to her, and she had not the effrontery to ask him to explain. Her sense of the fitness of things told her that it was not for her to understand what M. d'Orléans said. She had a half-suspicion, too, that he spoke so as not to be understood, but the idea that he was "quizzing" her was too delicious to be entertained. Madame never spoke to her except to give orders, but Monsieur was by no means so distant. Sometimes, when Madame left after a quarrel (they quarreled early and often) and Ethelberta, going into the drawing-room, found Monsieur alone, he would engage her in talk for a couple of minutes. He always spoke to her in the form of a question, which made it quite easy to deliver a simple opinion, generally consisting of a "yes" or "no," as she guessed occasion to demand it.

One evening, after a protracted consultation with Madame, Monsieur suddenly called to Ethelberta as she was attending to the fire.

"Ethelberta," he said, with his deep, foreign voice.

The delight of hearing him address her was almost too much for her self-

possession, but she stood up and faced him.

"Yes, sir," she said.

"Do *you* think that the same unspeakable instincts of unperverted egoism run through all women, independently of their station and culture?"

The tone of his question, not the meaning of it, made her answer "No, sir."

"What! Don't you believe with me that culture only alters the form which the expression of this egoism takes, and that it no more affects the character itself than a silk blouse the skin under it?"

Ethelberta pricked up her ears at the "silk blouse," and lost herself altogether. She stammered and grew red.

"Don't know, sir."

"The same! The same! Vrai dieu!"

He paused for a moment, and stroked his beard. Then a smile stole out on his face.

"Ethelberta, you don't understand a word of what I am saying, do you?"

At the first intelligible question she straightened suddenly.

"No, sir," she answered decisively.

"Is that a fact?" he asked with a sudden sternness.

"Stroos Gawd, sir," she said breathlessly, startled by his abrupt earnestness. He chuckled with an intense delight.

"Ethelberta," he said, "never mind all this. My nephew will be here in a day or two. Make ready the middle room for him. That is all."

She went out as in a trance. Master never spoke to her without lifting her out of herself, without making her feel that she belonged to a little, narrow, unsatisfactory world of pails, and bannisters, and potato-peel. A few words from master could exalt her for a week: and it was during such weeks that William received his rare snubs.

The nephew arrived the next day. Ethelberta herself was so deeply engrossed in an inner vision that she did not notice his arrival: and the first intimation that she had of his presence was the sudden appearance of the

young man himself. Ethelberta was toiling up the cellar steps with a scuttling of coal, and when she got near the kitchen door she was about to set it down, but she heard a "Permit me, M'mselle," spoken by the most musical of voices, and a handsome young fellow held the door open for her. Her heart beat violently as she said, "Thank you, sir." He bowed as she passed in, then closed the door behind her.

For a moment she stood in the empty kitchen, dazed, then she collapsed on the sofa, and burst into a torrent of tears.

That evening William received an unequivocal refusal to "come out." He took it philosophically, and only remarked that he had received an increase of salary, and a change of position. He would deliver meat no more to Ethelberta, but he would write her notes. Ethelberta scarce heard him, and took no note whatever of his words. She did not dislike William, but of a sudden he had become nobody to her, stood for nothing, filled no place. The slip of paper with his new address she let slip from her grasp as soon as William was gone.

The entrance of Monsieur's nephew inaugurated a new era. A light seemed to have burst over the house. Life became magically radiant. The drawing-room became a centre of mirth and *bonhomie*; the smoke of rare cigars filled the room with a rare aroma: new waltzes and mazurkas flashed out of the piano, and mingled laughter rang up to Ethelberta's room until the small hours.

The fourth evening after the nephew's arrival Ethelberta was startled into ecstatic admiration by the appearance at the front door of a motor-car, out of which stepped, resplendently adorned, Madame, handed out by the nephew, immaculately black and white, and followed by the master, impressively robed in his Inverness. The scene proved almost too much for Ethelberta. She fled to her room and hugged herself for ten minutes to express and repress her rising emotions.

A little later steady footsteps, light and swift, came up the stairs, and the door of her room was flung open. She looked up, palpitating, and beheld the young gentleman, apologetic, but self-possessed.

"A thousand pardons, m'mselle," he said, "I have blundered into your room by a careless oversight. I am exceedingly sorry." And he withdrew with a bow. Ethelberta sat dazed.

A minute or two later Madame's clear voice rang up the stairs.

"Antoine!" she called up, "are you coming down? Antoine!"

"Antoine!" The blood rushed into Ethelberta's head. She whispered the name over, and then, conscious that her pronunciation was grotesquely at fault, she repeated it mentally.

"Antoine! Antoine! Antoine! Oh!"

She sat upon her bed without taking note of the time. Then, through the haze of her emotions, she heard the drawing-room door open, and the sound of voices became louder and clearer. She heard "Good-night!" and then the deliberate steps of the master approaching and passing. The door downstairs closed, and silence followed.

Ethelberta could bear it no longer. A quarter of an hour after Monsieur had gone to bed she opened the door softly and crept stealthily downstairs. By the door of the drawing-room she paused and listened. The voices were subdued. How musical they sounded! The language spoken was not English, but one full of tender vowels and inflexions. Two words she heard recurring with dulcet regularity: "Antoine" and "Marianne," but the rest was unintelligibly beautiful.

She stood there till the world around had passed away, and she forgot herself in the two lovely voices. It must have been late, very late, when she was awakened abruptly by the scraping of a chair, and the sound of movements. She stood trembling in indecision. Footsteps approached the door, and she became more and more terrified. A hand groped about the door for a

moment, and then the door was opened. Ethelberta shrank into the shadow. Madame passed out, and then turned her face, tender in the light, and said "Good-night, Antoine." He responded softly, then Madame turned away, and passed upstairs. Ethelberta remained in her place, too agitated to move.

In a few minutes the door opened again. The light was suddenly switched off, and a figure brushed past her slowly. Ethelberta nearly swooned. At last she crept upstairs, and wept herself to sleep.

At the end of the first week a change took place in the order of things. The master returned to his moods of melancholy. He would remain alone in the house. Once he stopped Ethelberta just when the visitant charwoman had left and questioned her abruptly.

"What do you think of it, Ethelberta?" He did not wait for an answer, but said savagely. "It does not matter a damn. It's as good an ending as any other."

Then he laughed and asked another question, this time perfectly intelligible.

"Ethelberta, have you seen the letter that's come for you?"

Her heart jumped. "Letter, sir? No, sir."

"It's from a firm of butchers, judging from the envelope. You'll find it on the hall stand." He passed on. Ethelberta remembered suddenly about William, but she did not go for the letter.

An element of ill-ease seemed to have entered the house with the end of the first week after the nephew's arrival—a feeling of crossed and thwarted purposes. Master became ferociously gloomy: mistress was always coming and going in a swirl of silk: nephew was dashing in and out bewilderingly. Ethelberta waited for glimpses of him with patient humility. Now and again he addressed her, sometimes asking a question, sometimes risking a request, but always with scrupulous courtesy.

One day, nearly two weeks after his arrival, he handed her a letter as she passed the hall stand. Their fingers met as she took it.

In the kitchen she opened the envelope. It contained a short note from William.

"Dear Ethelberta,

I will wait for you on Sunday night at eight at the old place.

If you cannot come please let me know.

Faithfully yours,
William."

She was about to destroy the note when she thought of something. She went up to her room, and at her little table wrote hastily with a pencil.

"Dear Wiliam:

I am not coming to meet you sundy nigth, and I am not coming ever at all to meet you again.

Ethelberta."

She inclosed the note in an envelope, and left it on the table, to post it at her leisure; then she went down, passing Monsieur Antoine on her way to the kitchen.

"I am not coming ever at all to meet you again!" She repeated the words exultantly whenever she passed or saw Monsieur Antoine during the rest of the day. She observed him now in a new light—there was now an element of the proprietorial in her subconscious make-up—as though she had purchased a privilege by right of sacrifice: as if she had gained not merely a proprietorial interest, but, for a reason which was as indefinable as it was incontrovertible, an entrance into the lofty world she worshipped. She had taken a great step: she could not argue or analyze whether it was for better or for worse—but the step had been taken, and she felt as timid as she was delighted.

For the next twenty-four hours she strove to accommodate her mentality to the new situation. She felt that she was a new person, must think differently, must have different emotions. The experience was exceedingly uncomfortable, but there was something daring about it. She was nearer,

somehow, to "Antoine": she had even the right to say his name to herself as often as she liked. She could even dream . . .

The afternoon following the day that she had determined on the great venture she was sitting dreamily in the kitchen. There was no one in the house but she and the master, and he was moping, as she had seen two or three times, in the big drawing-room. She was settling down to a very circumstantial, constructive dream when there was a sharp "Rat-tat-tat!" at the front door.

She rose with a sigh. A messenger-boy was waiting with a telegram for Monsieur d'Orleans.

She took it in wonderingly. The master was stretched upon the sofa, and had to be called twice before he answered. She handed him the telegram timidly.

He sat bolt upright, and ripped the envelope open. Ethelberta saw a ter-

rific storm darken his face. For a moment she feared a tremendous explosion, but his face changed from a set pucker to a grim sneer. He leaned back on the couch.

"Ethelberta," he said, "when a Frenchman who can't speak German marries a German who can't speak French it may be good for their English, but not for their future. What do you say?"

Ethelberta made no answer.

"Ethelberta," he said abruptly, "take a week's notice. My nephew has run away with my wife. For God's sake clear out of the room."

Ethelberta walked out in a daze. She stumbled upstairs, and collapsed on the bed, but she could not rest. She rose and sat down by the table, and her eye fell on the still unposted letter intended for William.

With a swift gesture she picked up the note, ripped it once, twice, and flung the fragments into the fireplace.



NOTHING is more wearying than frivolity, especially to those who have to observe it.



NO matter how stupid a woman may be, she always knows when a man is in love with her two or three laps before he discovers it himself.



IN marriage the troubles of life are divided. Woman's is to find out what to wear; man's is to find the money to pay for it.



WIT and virtue are mere corollaries. Any woman who is unmistakably beautiful has enough of both for all practical purposes.

AFTER LONG YEARS

By Lucy Stone Terrill

ELEANOR was dead. He had just read it in the old home paper. Over in the corner maple young robins were twittering softly with now and then a higher, more discordant note. The robins had first nested there in the spring of that year when he had last seen Eleanor—eight years ago. Her hair had curled soft and white around her face and he was walking awkwardly with his first crutch.

"Why, John, we must be growing old," had been her first words to him, to bridge a chasm of forty-two years. "It doesn't seem possible that *we* have grown old—I didn't know it till just this minute."

"From looking at me," he had made irritated answer, angered sorely at his tired old body; and then, stupidly: "It's no use hoping any longer, Eleanor."

"It looks that way, John," she had laughed gently, "but then, where many have had only dreams, we've had memory. Be careful, John, that step is high—it always bothers *me*, too."

Oh, the sweetness of her. He had been ashamed to clamber slowly up the little step. But Eleanor had stepped even more slowly, which had somehow comforted him strangely. And her gentleness, as though hers had been the fault that they had not grown old together.

The robins in the maple raised a louder clamor. Eleanor had loved them, he remembered. Once, when they were riding through the old home woods, she had made him stop and catch a little crippled robin fluttering by the roadside. He could still see her as she leaned from the buggy and held out her hand for it.

"Oh, you poor little thing," she had

said. The words seemed to drift in to him through the trees. But Eleanor was dead now, and all the years had gone and they had known none of them together. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his forehead slowly. He had not realized before what a comfort it had been to know that she was somewhere, some place, in the world.

How full of laughter she had always been!

Suddenly she seemed to stand, slender and girlish, poised for flight, right on the step in front of his chair.

"If you want to kiss me, John Roberts," her lips dared him with perfect distinctness, "you'll have to catch me first."

"Eleanor!" he said aloud, and started at the sound of his weak old voice.

Slowly it came back to him through the paths of memory, where it was she had looked like that. Oh, yes,—and he had caught her; fifty years ago, it was. His eyes closed as he remembered, and his old lips trembled.

"Eleanor Davis will keep some man on a wild goose chase all of his life," people had used to say of her. Well, perhaps she had done so, but oh, to what heights must the chase have led!

Again she was with him, down by the bend where the creek turned into a little sheltered nook, a nook made especially for moonlight picnics. She knelt on the ground before a feeble fire, toasting two marshmallows on a long stick, and the flickering light flashed dancing shadows over her face; the dear, sensitive, laughing, serious, ever-changing face. That was the night they had climbed to the top of Chestnut Hill and watched the moon rise over the old mill—the night before the

cursed money came that took him from her. She had been of a sudden quiet and serious.

"No matter what happens, John, or where you go," she had whispered shyly, as he had stood with both his arms around her while all the world brimmed full of naught but moonlight and the love of him and her, "you can always shut your eyes and know that I am loving you right that minute just the same as I do now."

And two unshed tears had glistened in her eyes, the only time he ever saw anything but laughter in them. With a gesture of utter weariness, the old man ran his fingers back through his thin white hair.

"How awful long it's been," he muttered vacantly, "how *awful*, awful long."

"If you want to kiss me, John Roberts, you'll have to catch me first."

Why, there she stood again, teasing, lovely, daring him. He raised slowly in his chair and put out his hand to her. She evaded it laughingly and backed to the second step. That was the dress his mother gave her. How pretty she was in blue, with all that yellow hair tumbling around on her head!

"Oh, honey," he said pleadingly in clear, high tones. The dozing Airedale beside him raised his head in quick inquiry and nosed his master's legs, but the old man failed to pat him. His eyes were eager on the radiant girl in front of him. She leaned toward him temptingly and held out both bared arms. "You'll have to catch me first," she repeated.

"Oh, I can do that, you witch," said the old man and stood quick on his feet. A twitch of nerves caught his features, but his eyes held only expectant youth. He walked unswaying down the steps, gazing straight ahead at the girl who backed laughingly from him. The dog shook himself, smelled the crutches beside the chair, barked shortly, and followed with fast wagging stubby tail.

She led them through the curved paths to the gate in the hedge that

opened into the garden. The old man's feet did not falter. Several times he reached for her suddenly, but she eluded him by an inch. He quickened his pace. A slow stream of saliva started from the corner of his trembling lips. He all but touched her and laughed aloud. The dog scampered by his side, sniffing and growling softly.

She was leading them through the beautiful garden into the unkept grove beyond. Once, by a smooth-trimmed shrub, his fingers touched her shoulders, but she jerked away, and turning about, ran from him. The old man stumbled against the shrub.

"I'll have *forty* kisses for that," he panted, and broke into a shuffling run. But he was falling behind. The vacant smile on his face gathered into troubled wrinkles.

"Why, you can't catch me, John Roberts," called the girl, hesitating on the edge of the grove. "There's no use trying. You're getting old. What will you give me to wait for you?"

The old man ran faster, his back slowly bending lower.

"I *will* catch you," he called, and choked miserably. The dog's tail stopped wagging. He trotted beside the old man silently, running ahead often to look up into his face. The girl disappeared into the dusk of the trees. The old man stopped and peered about.

"*Eleanor!*" he screamed shrilly, his voice vibrant with fear; the Airedale whined and sniffed at his legs.

"Will you marry me if I let you catch me?" came the sweet, pleading voice, faint through the shadows of the grove.

"*Yes!* I want to marry you. None of them can stop me. Do you hear? None of them! Come back, Eleanor; for God's sake, please come back!" He stumbled forward over the damp leaves into the sweet, spring-scented grove.

"What about this other girl—what about *her*, John? Remember, you've broken your promise to me once. And she has such pretty dresses!"

The voice was nearer to him, but he could not see her. *How* he loved her! His arms ached for her—a terrible ache,

the ache of fifty empty years. But this other girl—what *could* he do? And the money. What could he do?

"Good-bye," came her voice, farther away, fainter.

"Don't go! Come back. Come back to me, Eleanor." His words spluttered out of his throat and rose higher, shriller. "I don't want her—the other one. I'm sick of her. I hate her. You know I hate her. . . . Oh, Eleanor, honey, honey . . . my honey . . . my own . . ." His voice fell to a choking whisper. He was crying with a great relief—a wonderful happiness. Sobbing and muttering, he stumbled towards her, his hands outstretched. For she was coming into his arms, slowly coming, smiling at him with the old sweet tenderness, immeasurable comfort in her eyes. The dog, following his master's gaze, straightened backward on stiffened legs, his hair upright along his back, and howled. The old man kicked him out of the path.

At last. He held her. Her head nestled close to his. Her soft yellow hair blew into his eyes. The slender pink fingers stroked his face. For fifty years he had felt those fingers on his face whenever he closed his eyes. Now they were there again.

He swayed to and fro, crooning over her, while the dog whined, trembling, with his tail tight between his legs.

"My own little sweetheart—we'll be married tomorrow—my honey—my—" he muttered happily.

But the burden in the old man's arms was slowly slipping away from him. He clasped it closer, but it slid down between his arms and body and fell limply to the ground. And the hair around her temples was not golden but was white and thin and the face was yellowed and traced with wrinkles.

The old man knelt over her, silent but for his choked, guttural breathing. Ter-

rified and whining, the dog slunk back the way they had come. Suddenly the old man straightened on his knees and pushed his hands fiercely upward—

"Damn you! Go 'way—I caught her—she's mine, I tell you, *mine*. Tell him so, Eleanor, tell him so—tell him—"

He fought the air vainly and struggled for the limp figure among the wet brown leaves. But he could not hold her. So he stretched himself painfully over the place where her body had lain, his wrinkled fists full of dirt and leaves—and cried.

Soon the dog came tearing back, madly barking; and behind him ran a handsome woman in a riding habit and a pretty child, followed by a group of servants. The woman ran to him and stooped to raise him, but fell back and drew the child behind her, at the madness she saw in the old man's eyes.

"Father—*father!*" she screamed.

"You and your money!" choked the old man in a wild, helpless fury, "I'm sick of you—I hate you—I'm going to wait here till she comes back to me—my pretty little Eleanor—my honey—"

Mumbling and crying, the servants carried him back to the great house. Beside the weeping, white-cheeked woman, the child danced in a fever of frightened excitement, determined to have answers to her questions:

"Mama! Tell me! What's the matter? Has a snake bit grandpa? Tell me! What did he mean? Who's Eleanor, Mama? Tell me—who's Eleanor?"

"Be quiet, Dorothy; I don't know who Eleanor is. It probably is a pet name he called your grandmother. He must have been more lonely for her than we knew. Poor, poor father—he must have been more lonely than we knew."



LA VIE DES MINEURS

Par Pol d'Ostrevent

SAINTE BARBE, personne ne l'ignore, est la patronne des canoniers, des artificiers, des artilleurs et des pompiers.

Mais ce qu'on sait moins, c'est que les mineurs, les houilleurs, sans doute parce que le grisou les expose, eux aussi, aux explosions, se réclament de cette martyre bithynienne qui attira la foudre sur son bourreau.

Ces diables d'hommes, souvent muets, et comme concentrés en eux-mêmes, ont ainsi leur jour de fête. Et se n'est que justice.

On a l'impression que leur rôle a quelque chose de tragique, quand on les voit, avec leur bourgeron de toile blanche, leur bidon de fer étamé, leur "barrette" ou leur chapeau de cuir bouilli, descendre par la "cage" énorme, au fond, dans la "fosse," à cinq ou six cents pieds sous terre. . . . Il est six heures du matin et déjà tout la "coupe à la veine" est à l'ouviage. Les mineurs, d'un geste persévérant et rythmique, à coups de "pic" répétés, "tapent à la veine," suivant une expression locale, et, de tous côtés, le travail du "défilage" et de l'extraction absorbe les énergies obstinées et obscures.

Jusqu'à trois heures du soir, les berlines de houille et les berlines du remblai roulent sur les rails des galeries, poussées par les hercheurs à charbon et les hercheurs à terre, et tirées avec des courroies de cuir par les bricoleurs dans les montées, tandis que les "mineurs à la veine" continuent d'abattre la matière minérale, que les chargeurs à l'accrochage disposent les berlines dans les cages d'extraction et que, de-ci, de-là, évoluent par "équipes" reculeurs,

conducteurs de chevaux et galibots.

Un maître-portion distribue la besogne à ce peuple de troglodytes. Les porions "de coupe" et "d'about" se chargent de la faire exécuter. Et c'est partout un bourdonnement de ruche qui ne s'atténue que lorsque la "coupe à terre"—boiseurs, rancheurs, restapleurs et raccommodeurs,—est venue remplacer la "coupe à la veine" pour le boisage des galeries et le remblayage.

Il est alors environ trois heures. Les ouvriers s'entassent dans les berlines des deux cages qui, alternativement, montent et descendent, déposant à chaque arrêt leur fardeau humain dans le "moulinage." On voit tourner lentement la roue immense de la machine motrice, et le câble se dérouler sur les molettes du "chevalet." C'est l'heure de la "remonte."

Par groupes de vingt, les mineurs reparaissent à la surface, sur le "carreau." Leurs grands yeux blancs au milieu de leur visage noirci leur donnent un air diabolique et presque menaçant. Vite, ils s'en vont accrocher leurs lampes à la lampisterie. Et les voilà repartis vers les corons, ces longs quartiers de maisons pareilles, aux trois fenêtres rectilignes garnies de rideaux blancs, aux petits jardinets bien entretenus.

Ces maisonnettes sont bien typiques. La poussière de charbon qui s'insinue partout se plaque sur leurs murs, sur leurs toits de tuiles, salit la verdure de leurs potagers, ronge le velouté des fleurs que la coquetterie des femmes met au rebord des fenêtres. Les portes restent presque toujours entr'ouvertes, et le passant peut apercevoir la propreté intérieure de ces corons et leur semis

neigeux de sable fin sur le dallage en carreaux rouges.

Les diminaches, les jours de fête, ces demeures ouvrières s'animent. Et le soir, dans les cabarets, dans les "estaminets," comme on dit là-bas, on entend se contorsionner des airs d'accordéons, tandis que nos rudes travailleurs rient et fument en vidant de grandes "chopes" de bière. Car les mineurs, énigmatiques au premier abord, sont, au fond, bons garçons, et la cordialité qui règne entre eux est parfaite.

Pourtant, aux jours de grève, malheur aux camarades qui "déquintent à l'fosse" en dépit des engagements pris.

En cette période d'excitation, les gendarmes doivent protéger, à leur sortie de la mine, ceux qui sont allés travailler quand même. Ces jours-là, ces hommes hâves, aux figures tatouées de cicatrices saturées de charbon, prennent soudain un air résolu, et leurs yeux ternis brillent d'un éclat inaccoutumé.

Dans les cabarets où ils se réunissent, se tinnent d'énergiques conciliabules. Les femmes sont souvent plus enragées que les hommes, et, sur le passage de la troupe et des "traîtres," elles glapissent des injures. Quelquefois elles sont les premières à jeter des pierres.

C'est par des temps de grève que le pays minier est vraiment triste. Le "terri" laisse tomber sur ses schistes amoncelés la lourde stupeur d'un repos inaccoutumé. La mine est désertée. Les enfants ont perdu leur gaieté exhubérante, car il n'y a plus de pain dans les corons. . . .

Quand l'homme est là, il ne dit rien. Et, si la femme parle, il s'en retourne au cabaret.

Mais le mineur se dit bientôt que cela ne peut pas durer. Le *fond*, avec son mouvement, ses chevaux, ses berlines roulantes et ses galibots espiègles, le *fond* encore une fois l'attire . . . et c'est ainsi que la grève prend fin.



EL hombre es el fuego, la mujer la estopa, viene el diablo y sopla.



Il n'y a pa de vie heureuse, il y a seulement des jours heureux.



UNE femme qui écrit a deux torts, elle augmente le nombre des livres et diminue le nombre des femmes.



A SHORT life and a merry one! How many of us, alas, could stand merri-ment long?



WITH THE MINSTRELS OF THE MOMENT

By George Jean Nathan

IT is the prescription of a large parcel of our theatrical reviewers habitually to mistake (1) a deep speaking voice for acting ability; (2) physical motion for dramatic action; (3) veracity for vulgarity; (4) all audible or visible hysteria, such as bosom-heaving, fist-clenching and nose-blowing, for emotion; (5) age for experience; (6) merely terse dialogue for dramatic dialogue; and—(7) sad plays for serious plays.

A sad play, that is to say a play which brews a bourgeois tear, which moves in an atmosphere of gloom, is inevitably regarded by these gentlemen as a serious play, while a gay play, a play which shakes the belly to mirth, is quite as inevitably looked on as the contrary. Thus do we observe such an absurd snuffle salad as "The Shadow" and such a nose opera as "Marie-Odile" approached with profound and studious frown, while such a flip, light, laughing, jolly thing as "Androcles and the Lion"—which is a thousand times as serious—is amiably but promptly dismissed as—let me see, how goes the phrase? Ah, yes, I have it—"good fun." The philosophy of such critical pinocchio is, of course, unconsciously jocose. Particularly when one recalls that a play is often sad in proportion to its absence of thought; that emotion and calm hard thinking seldom go together; that new ideas ever impress the community as comic, and that, in brief (again to repeat Walpole), life is a tragedy to those who feel and a comedy to those who think. As the eye becomes moist, the brain becomes dry.

Let us look first to "The Shadow," one of the *contes drolatiques* of those Von Tilters of the tear, Dario Niccodemi and Michael Morton, done to order for the person of Miss Ethel Barrymore and following to the letter the Frohman commandment that in all Frohman plays the woman must have the whip hand. The facetious extent to which this sentimentalization of the skirt has developed in the local show business is, by the way, acutely instanced in a comparison of this play with a play called "The Fallen Idol," which immediately preceded it on the metropolitan stage. "The Fallen Idol" held a brief for the healthy wife bound by law to a paralytic husband. "The Shadow" holds a brief against the healthy husband bound by law to a paralytic wife! With such bogus economy how may one bear patiently?

"The Shadow," being a lugubrious film, has, as set down, been accepted widely as a serious play. And yet it remains that its *bühne* bawlings, its salty drizzles, spurt from a set of characters whose motives and decisions are patently spurious. These characters are of the French upper middle class. Yet their every posture on the pedestal of morals, marital relationship and ethical conduct reveals unmistakable string-pulling by an Anglo-Saxon hand. The characters, indeed, are approximately as French as an American actor's pronunciation of *monsieur*. Their names are Tregnier, Magre and Michel Délon, but their philosophies are Smith, Jones and Bill Jenkins. This, probably the consequence of the

bi-national nature of the play's authorship. I may imagine nothing more difficult than a piece of sound dramatic workmanship dealing with Parisian morals emanating from a collaboration twixt a Frenchman and an Anglo-American.

As I envisage it, this play is a mere effigy of the commonplace French drama of two decades ago. The touch of thematic novelty which many of my colleagues claim for it, to wit, the fact that the wife is a paralytic and that the husband's amorous aberration thus assumes a new justice, seems to me perfectly inconsequent, inasmuch as the wife recovers from her paralysis fifteen minutes or so after the curtain rises on the first act and inasmuch as, therefore, from this point on, the stage traffic resolves itself into the old triangle of the equally old French drama. If, forsooth, there be any novelty to the play, that novelty must repose in the acts that occur in advance of the first act. Certainly, once the curtain is up a scant quarter hour, we give audience to nothing newer or more vital than a skeleton of Becque's "L'Enlèvement" (originally produced in 1871)—with the bones removed.

"Marie-Odile," a play by Edward Knoblauch, being both sad and produced by Mr. Belasco, was taken in doubly serious manner by my confrères. All, that is, save one who, estimating the exhibit accurately for what it was honestly worth, so annoyed the officials of his journal that the latter in holy indignation visited upon him the oblique bounce just ten minutes before Mr. Belasco himself hove onto the premises to raise his urbane voice against the low school of dramatic criticism represented by the fellow—the low school which fails to anoint the person of Mr. Belasco, every time he produces a play, with sweet and oozy unguents and all the cerates of wizardry. The school of taffy-pullers, marshmallow Mascagnis and grandsons of Ursus—ah ha, that is yet a different matter!

Although I have consistently held

my pen aloof from comment on such ludicrous critical intriguing, believing, first, with the keen-visioned Mr. Percy Hammond and others that by such insensate gestures the managers are digging their own graves, and, second, that after all it is really none of my business, it still would seem to me that my colleagues of the daily press would awake to a resentment, not particularly against critic-baiting (which in specific cases has been found to be just), but against the baiting of dramatic criticism. A clearly different thing, in all faith, this latter. To what yahoo level has journalistic theatrical criticism sunk that the mere loud holler of some vain, pouting show-clerk is sufficient to remove a loyal and talented student of the theater from its practise? Mr. Belasco, true, has been not the only pea-blower at virginal criticism, but he *has* been a prima ballerina in the matter of using a Maxim silencer at the end of his shooter. Where other managers have frankly, openly, bravely entered the newspaper offices and said frankly, openly, bravely that they would remove their remunerative advertising unless they were given proportionate doses of critical goose-grease and beef-fat—as I see it, a perfectly fair bargain in a world of bargaining—Mr. Belasco has practised the finer shadings, the perfumed subtleties, the soft-glove work. And more's the pity in the case of this gentleman. For the man who has produced such plays as "The Easiest Way," "The Phantom Rival" and "The Concert," the man who has developed a Frances Starr and a David Warfield, should be too intelligent, too artistic, too capable and self-respecting a fellow to immerse himself in so girl-ish a business.

When, a year or so ago, Mr. Louis Sherwin, the able critic to the *Globe*, pointed out the deficiencies of one of Mr. Belasco's productions, why did not Mr. Belasco weigh Mr. Sherwin's critique carefully (and possibly profit by it) instead of forthwith summoning his sinister ambassadors, adjusting their rubber shoes for them and despatching

them in haste to Dey Street. Mr. Sherwin's ideas of the play in point were, as I remember them, in direct opposition to my own views of the play; I analyzed it, indeed, as a play of vivacious merit; but Mr. Sherwin's ideas, as I recall them, were based upon a thoroughly honest judgment and were probably, after all, as tenable as my own more favorable impressions.

This notion that a critic writes adversely of a play or a theatrical enterprise because he prefers to write adversely is a piece of luscious piffle blooming in the managerial head. Show me the critic who would not write praise if the occasion merited praise and I will show you a dodo-bird. The attitude of the late Princess Theater, recently disclosed to you in these pages, was emblematic of this peculiar managerial infatuation. Instead of reading my suggestions for what they may or may not have been worth, instead of permitting me thus in humble measure possibly to help the institution by pointing out what were its plainly apparent mistakes—mistakes clear to nine out of ten persons—the Princess Theater preferred to conceal its own inefficiency by promulgating me as an abandoned Apache and wife-beater—and what the result? Three months ago I wrote from moderately lucid observation "Unless the Princess ceases to believe that anything which keeps the curtain up twenty minutes is, perforce, a one-act play . . . the Princess is destined to rise to the estate of a moving-picture house." And, as I set down these words, the Princess Theater is showing a motion picture called "Hypocrites." But enough. Let us to the Knoblauch play.

This play, though its language is of the deft and musical quality associated with its author's name, amounts to little more than a burlesque of Maeterlinck's "Sister Beatrice." John Luther Long's play, "Kassa," done by Mrs. Leslie Carter about six years ago at the Liberty Theater and dealing in a general way with the same stage materials, was a more imaginative and a

better play. Although, true enough, a bad play. The central idea of "Marie-Odile" has been maneuvered many times by many men, and Mr. Knoblauch has not only not improved upon these maneuverings, but has, to the contrary, failed to uncurtain anything like the proportion of lively imagination vouchsafed in them. A play by a sophomore in Harvard College, done half a dozen years ago and printed in one of the undergraduate gazettes, dealt the chief point of Knoblauch's play a vastly better treatment. To the ancient tale of the nun led into the pensive glammers of the world, Knoblauch has brought but a single touch of pseudo-modernity. He has made his Herr Lorelei a young Prussian under-officer. And this solitary fresh touch, to boot, has plunged Mr. Knoblauch into several absurdities. Imagine the chief officer of a company of Uhlans, ever the *über-professoren* of military discipline and rigidity, urging one of his corporals, in a tactical crisis, with the enemy not far away and about to register an attack, imagine the officer remaining behind for a spell in order to urge the corporal to defer carrying out an important scouting mission long enough to seduce a likely looking girl. Imagine a company of Uhlans, with the foe near at hand, carrying on high-jinks inside a convent without a single man on guard duty outside.

The play is, in short, a belated effort again to make money out of bad drama soaked in so-called religious atmosphere. Not merely bad drama, but what to many must seem indiscreet and objectionable drama. Imagine the Mother Superior of a convent banishing from the convent a nun who has come by a baby—and yet blessing the baby ere she casts it out. Imagine a convent made the theatrical residence in Act I of the old Cinderella story, with the Mother Superior and all the sisters save one serving as the wicked stepmothers; the theatrical residence in Act II of Paul Potter's "The Conquerors," and the theatrical residence in Act III of a baby spotlight haloing

with deliberate significance the bastard son of a young German insurance clerk. Such things may not be sacrilegious, but they may be irreverent. Against all such tawdry attempts at capitalizing the religious sentimentalities I stand opposed. If we are to have religion and its parts treated in the drama—and where a better theme?—let us by all means have the theme treated intelligently and with a show of philosophic skill, rather than that it be served up as a medium for a Hanlon Brothers' tassel-tinsel extravaganza. The considerable success of "Androcles" may be the finger pointing at last to a public concurrence in this wish. And the "Androcles" box-office may at last in a measure be contradicting Shaw's until now truthful statement that "the deepest realities of religion are the most unbearable of all subjects for the purely theatrical public."

Although, of course, I am not one to make pretence to a knowledge of the set of tricks called stage direction, it yet appears to me that Mr. Belasco's production of the Knoblauch work might possibly in several directions be improved upon. For example, would not a withholding of the aureolizing baby spotlight from the head of Marie-Odile during the first two acts vitalize the presence of the effulgence in the last act, wherein is drawn the analogy of the Virgin Mary? For example, when Marie-Odile is called upon by the boisterous soldiers to lift them a toast, when Marie-Odile then speaks her prayer that they may all be soon and safely returned to their mothers (regards to Owen Davis, Jules Eckert Goodman, et al.), would not a gradual cessation of ribaldry on the part of the men of war be more effective than the instantaneous and unanimous silence and bowing of heads? For example, is not the sympathy trick of Marie-Odile's drudgery overdone; is there not possibly too much floor sweeping, furniture dusting, waiting on table, and does not the little Marie-Odile thus gradually become less sympathetically impressive as a poor nun and more sym-

pathetically impressive as a good servant girl? For example, why the casting of the crack Coldstream Guards of Prussia in the bodies of a grotesque congress ranging from five feet two to six one? For example, why not a detection of the guard error mentioned hereinbefore? But—these, after all, are trivial things. The main point is this: that Mr. Knoblauch has not composed a good play.

Washing the hands of such distasteful obligations of criticism, it becomes a happy duty to announce "The White Feather," by Messrs. Lechmere Worrall and Harold Terry, as the best farce, by all odds, that England has sent us in many years. That the play was not intended as farce is, of course, not at all to the authors' discredit. Let us not forget that Columbus believed merely again to touch Asia and in the act discovered a new continent. A farce is a good farce in proportion to the amount of laughter it provokes. And by this definition "The White Feather" is not only a good farce but—as I have said—a really great farce.

Almost all comedy is based on the fact that a man will do anything for the woman he loves. So—alas—is almost all tragedy.

Almost all farce is based on the celebrated problem that if the village barber shaves every man in the village except those who shave themselves, and the barber shaves himself, who shaves the barber? And where not based on this problem, farce is grounded upon the equally renowned theory that if a man twenty-five years old marries a girl five years old (i. e., the man being five times as old as the girl) and lives with her five years, the man will then be thirty years old and the girl ten, thus making the man only three times as old as the girl; that if they live together ten years more, the man will be forty and the girl twenty, thus making the man only twice as old as the girl; that if they live together ten years more the man will be fifty and the girl thirty, thus making the man considerably less than twice as old as the girl;

and that, therefore, if the man and girl live together long enough they will be of the same age. Substituting villainous German spies for the village barber, heroic English secret service agents for the twenty-five year old man, and Now-All-Together-Boys-Rule-Britannia for the five year old girl, Messrs. Worral and Terry have otherwise adhered closely to the farce canons.

Why some of my critical colleagues should have seen fit to regard this play merely as an exceedingly cheap melodrama and quickly dismiss it as such I am unable to comprehend. To be sure, it was meant to be melodrama, but certainly this is small reason for the critical oversight in not having analyzed the play as an exceedingly fine farce. Observe, if you please, the materials. The scene is "a private sitting-room in the Wave Crest Hotel" on the east coast of England. This chamber is occupied by one who calls herself Sanderson and who, being a German spy commissioned with the immediate execution of a critical enterprise, invites a couple of British secret-service sleuths to spend the week-end with her. Following the other well-known custom obtaining in espionage, the lady then brings to her room three more Pilsner spies who craftily conceal their identity from the Bass scouts by dropping trays full of dishes whenever the latter give indication that their suspicions are being aroused. The canny Würzburger spies exercise additional caution by making sure all the doors and windows are wide open before consulting in loud voices as to their secret plans, and further indicate their cunning by leaving their tracings of the British fortifications on the tables and sofas only when the English secret-service people are in the room. Where, I now ask you, a nobbier premise for brilliant farce? Where a site for a more elegant guffaw brewery?

Coincident with this farce there was presented at the Maxine Elliott Theater a second admirable farce to be identified generally as "The Rented Earl." "The Rented Earl" was by Mr. Salisbury

Field, but the admirable farce was by Mr. William A. Brady. Like "The White Feather," "The Rented Earl" was a play of noteworthy mediocrity, but this circumstance prospered little in diminishing the enjoyability of the evening. Mr. Field's play dealt with the smart society colony at Lenox and Mr. Brady, ever on the alert for novelty and especially so in a season consecrated to novelty, conceived the excellent farce notion of producing the play with actors in the roles of the society characters. And, never satisfied with doing things in a half-way manner, this astute producer then conceived the droll idea of using for the last act scene (which Mr. Field had specified as "the terrace of 'The Westways,' Mrs. Sanderson-Burr's Lenox house") the last act set of his old musical comedy "The Balkan Princess." By these subtle devices Mr. Brady took what was intrinsically a dull play and made of it an hilarious evening.

Why is it, you wonder, that actors so regularly make a ridiculous showing in so-called society roles? The explanation is simple enough. Cast for a society character, an actor or actress imagines that he or she must, for the proper delineation of that character, affect a mien and manner at once suavely genteel and punctilious, courtly and *déagagé*. The result? Absurd, of course. For the proper delineation of such a character, an actor or an actress must affect a mien and manner at once ill-bred and vulgar. . . . As I have countless times observed, the only persons who do not act like society people are society people.

In connection with the performance of this play there is the quality of the apropos in the following remark of Henry James: "Purity of speech on our stage doesn't exist. Everyone speaks as he likes and audiences never notice; it's the last thing they think of. The place is given up to abominable dialects and individual tricks; any vulgarity flourishes; and, on top of it all, the Americans, with every conceivable crudity, come in to make confusion

worse confounded." I have heard Mrs. Leslie Carter, an American, pronounce "never" *nev-v-hair*; I have heard Miss Billie Burke, an American, pronounce it *satisfackshawn*; I have heard Mr. Robert T. Haines, an American, do up "relentless" as *relintless*, and Mr. Milton Sills, an American, dispense "suspicion" as something akin to *soospisiyon*. I have heard all this, and more. But I have also heard Mr. Julian L'Estrange, an Englishman, render "immediately" *immejully*; I have also heard Mrs. Patrick Campbell, an English subject, project "delightful" as *dell-ightfole*; I have also heard Mr. Beerbohm Tree, an Englishman, discharge "cemetery" as *scimetry*, and Miss Marie Tempest, an Englishwoman, gargle "conviction" into something like *cohen-viction*. I have heard all this, and more. But I have never, not even from the tonsil cave of a low American vaudeville sketch actor, heard such bizarre sounds, presumably standing for the English language, as emanated from the English actor D'Orsay in the role of the earl in this Field play. Let us be fair in this matter of pronunciation and articulation. Let us Americans forget our patriotism once in a while, our stanch patriotism for England and everything English from King George up to Phyllis Dare, and remember that, however much our own mummies may chew into the language, there are British actors equally as proficient in the technique of mastication. The circumstance that "secretary" pronounced *secetry* by an English buffo massages the American tympanum as smarter and more fashionable than plain American sec-re-ta-ry should not fool the jury for a moment.

An investigation into the pretensions and accomplishments of Mr. Granville Barker, currently the guest of the American theater, involves so many phases of this gentleman's theatrical experiments that I choose to defer a thorough estimate until such a day when I may insert myself into the enterprise with a more capacious leisure

than is at present at my command. Three years ago, if memory serves you, you may recall that I pursued a lengthy and somewhat uninteresting inquiry into the Barker claims to eminence—and was roundly rebuked for my painstaking labours by several of the more politic British critical organs. Now that considerable time has elapsed since I made these rash statements and now that I have had a more ample period wherein carefully to ponder over and weigh them, I see no good reason for changing my initial attitude.

First, Granville Barker, as a dramatist, is an unimportant figure. Hailed by many friendly Englishmen as a dramatic writer of large invention and a smasher into new ground, he reveals himself to the probably less biased eye as a rather futile merchant of bedizened echoes, whether of Meredith, or François de Curel, or Tchekhoff, or Brieux, or Shaw. In his plays, from first to last, I am able to detect little of note, little of distinction. A technical revolutionist with a black rubber ball for a bomb; a philosophic insurgent with a paper-cutter for a machette. Ashley Dukes has summed up Barker illuminatingly. P. P. Howe, in summing up Barker, has summed up P. P. Howe illuminatingly.

Second, Granville Barker as a producer. The sum total of the man's personal inventiveness, so far as I have been able to deduce from a study of his enterprises here and in London, has taken the form of a small board announcing in electric lights the period supposed to elapse between scenes and acts ("The Great Adventure"). Of his work with Hardy's "The Dynasts" I am not in position to speak. I am given to understand, through John Palmer, that it was highly adroit. However, in everything else he has produced, Barker—where he has not followed the obvious methods of, let us say, George Alexander—has followed the methods proceeding diversely from Craig, Reinhardt and the so-called impressionistic academy. He has in this direction ever been a selective, rather

than a creative, artist. And there is much to be argued over in several instances of this same selection—as, for example, his production of “Midsummer Night’s Dream” when compared with that of Reinhardt. The panegyric noise over the Barker centering of a play’s action upon a simple background would seem to emanate largely from those students who have failed to recall what has been in practise these many years at the Maly and Art theaters in Moscow and at the Cologne and Leipzig Municipal theaters. Even the school of pseudo-creative scenic artists with whom Barker has surrounded himself—men like Norman Wilkinson, Albert Rothenstein, et al.—are, as inferred, belated imitators of such men, themselves confessedly imitators, as Doctor K. Hagemann, intendant of the Mannheim Court Theater (see his “Hamlet,” 1908), and Max Martersteig, director of the Cologne Stadttheater (see “Herodes and Mariamne” and “Faust”).

Thirdly, Granville Barker as a director of acting, whether individual or ensemble. Can he be compared in this regard to our own Mr. Belasco or Mr. Augustus Thomas? I believe not. I have seen much of his histrionic direction, but in no case have the results of this direction seemed, at least to me, to match in vitality, imagination and force the results achieved by the two Americans mentioned. And beside that of the Germans, the Barker direction is even less impressive.

Fourthly and finally. To Mr. Barker is a full measure of credit for the general quality of worth attaching to the many plays he has selected for production on the stages over which he has been master. And to him is an equal credit for a consistently open vision toward everything that may tend to lift the modern theater out of the obloquy of wrinkled and out-worn traditions. But to name him for this an innovator,

a creative artist, a great man of the playhouse, is—I take it—to permit one’s gratitude for small though highly desirable favors to run away with one’s better judgment. No writer on the theater more than I admires such a theatrical figure as this Barker; and no one more than I would choose to see more like him prevail in this country. Yet is not our local army of snobs and fad-mongers making something of a monkey of itself with its absurd pounding out of the gentleman’s almighty genius, et cetera, on its fawning tin-pans?

Three plays and a revue remain before me ere I may conclude. May I beseech your indulgence and designate them in sketchy way. Here, then, we have “Inside the Lines,” by Earl Derr Biggers, amiable yarn-spinner, and here have we coincidentally another sh-sh comic melodrama in which the naughty German spy practises his odious dirty work. And here have we “The Clever Ones,” by Alfred Sutro, at the Punch and Judy Theater, which, as I told you last spring from overseas, is an imitation of Shaw that is all imitation and no Shaw. And here have we “The Trap,” by Richard Harding Davis and Jules Eckert Goodman, one of the “Don’t you love me enough to trust me, Will, even though appearances *are* against me” specimens of melodrama. The exhibit has one great merit. The villain is properly potted in the gizzy at twenty minutes past ten, thus making it unnecessary for members of the audience to remain for the last act and thus permitting them to get to their several favorite grape-juice spas half an hour in advance of the usual time. And here, in adios, have we the latest Winter Garden masque, “Maid in America,” *suprême* of chicken for the connoisseurs. A really good show, gentlemen of the jury. My judgment? Well, where it’s musical comedy—you know me, Al!

THE GRANDSTAND FLIRTS WITH THE BLEACHERS

By H. L. Mencken

CAN it be that Joseph Conrad connives at the current effort to make a popular novelist of him? Is it possible that the austere author of "Chance" and "Lord Jim" has determined after all these years to buck and best the Indiana genii? Does he actually lend a covert hand to those shameless Barabbases of Garden City, L. I., who advertise him as if he were some new brand of breakfast food or touring car, and republish his incomparable masterpieces in rows of pretty volumes, and bedizen the slip-covers thereof with encomiums by James Huneker, Edwin Björkman, J. B. Kerfoot, Edwin Markham, H. L. Mencken and other such tasters and snouters of good, bad and indifferent books?

One blushes to think of that sort of debauchery. It goes against tradition and the grain. But here, alas, is the damning evidence. Here, to wit, is "VICTORY" (*Doubleday-Page*), a bouncing and straightforward tale of love and villainy, a yarn as swift and compact as the veriest piece of trade goods, a fiction that even a tired business man might conceivably enjoy and understand. Gone are all the Conradian indirections of yesteryear: the backings and fillings, the endless interludes and by-the-ways, the amazing snarls and subtleties. In place of them there is a narrative that gets under way on the very first page and proceeds uninterruptedly to a *sforzando* and melodramatic close. It moves; it throbs; it grips. And the thing in it that does the gripping is not a meticulous and merciless anatomizing of motive and

emotion, as in "Lord Jim," or "Almayer's Folly," or "Under Western Eyes," but a skilful and deliberate piling up of dramatic suspense, as in "Germinal," or "McTeague," or (one almost adds) "Treasure Island." In brief, the story sets a new style for Conrad, and one obviously likely to increase his audience. Not even "Falk" or "Typhoon" has more naked action in it.

The scene is again the Eastern islands that the great Pole long ago preëmpted for his own, and the central figure is one Baron Alex Heyst, a wandering and enigmatical Swede. Of the origin and early history of this Heyst we never learn very much; when we meet him he has been drifting up and down those sapphire seas for years, and the one public enterprise of his life, the Tropical Belt Coal Company, has already gone to smash. All that remains of the Tropical Belt Coal Company is a pair of bungalows and a rickety jetty on a certain small and remote island—an island made visible (and sinister and hostile) for miles around by the volcano that glowers at one end of it. It is here, in one of the bungalows, that Heyst finally makes his home. Out from London, by Gibraltar, Suez, Aden, Colombo and Singapore, come certain huge packing cases, and out of the packing cases come books, furniture, plate and pictures. One of the pictures is a fine portrait of Heyst's father. He hangs it in the living-room of his bungalow and beneath its inscrutable gaze he dines in solitary state every evening, attended by his one servant and com-

panion, a silent Chinaman named Wang. Once in a great while, having mysterious business to transact with merchants and bankers, Heyst hails a passing trading ship from his jetty and makes a visit to Sourabaya, the parched capital of one of the far-flung Dutch Indies. There he puts up at Schomberg's Hotel and for a brief space gives the bibulous clerks and supercargoes of the port something to gossip about.

It is Schomberg (fat, carnal, timorous, a lieutenant of the reserve) who sets in train the events that make up the story of Heyst's undoing. A highly dubious "ladies'" orchestra has come to Sourabaya, officered by a greasy German disguised as Signor Zangiacomo, and Schomberg has installed it in an alleged concert hall adjoining his hotel. There it butchers Verdi and Meyerbeer of an evening, while the clerks and supercargoes swill gin-fizzes and ogle its constituent artists. Upon one of these artists, Alma by name, Schomberg himself casts a lascivious eye. He has a wife, true enough, and she is constantly visible in the background, but, as he himself says, he is devoid of conventional prejudices and superstitions—and Sourabaya is anything but a Methodist port. But this Alma, strangely enough, is not much impressed by the honor that Schomberg proposes to confer upon her. On the contrary, she regards his gross love-making with the utmost aversion, and in the end she is so terrified by it that she appeals to Heyst for help. Heyst is no ladies' man, but *noblesse oblige*! One morning, before the oafish Schomberg is astir, he puts Alma into a boat and departs with her for his island, and there, in that God-forsaken Eden, they make shift to marry each other, and, what is more, to fall in love. Alma is a simple girl and Heyst is a handsome man. Heyst is a simple fellow and Alma is a pretty girl.

Schomberg, back in Sourabaya, rages and gnashes his teeth like Gerald Basingstoke or Desperate Desmond. More, he babbles his woes to all who will give him ear, and so gradually

builds up a tremendous fiction of Heyst's villainy. He accuses the Swede of swindles and chicaneries innumerable, and even of a treacherous murder. He pictures the island of Alma's sanctuary as a sort of piratical retreat, with the profits of a thousand foul deeds hidden in its caves. And he tells the tale so often that he not only comes to believe it himself, but gives it wide currency in the archipelago, so that Heyst grows into a sort of legendary billionaire, a tropical Monte Cristo. Finally, from Schomberg's lips, it reaches one Martin Ricardo, a touring faro dealer and general blackleg, and from Ricardo it is transmitted to his master, the elegant Mr. Jones. This Mr. Jones is a gentleman adventurer whose field is the world. He has a past in Central America and another in the ports of the Eastern Mediterranean; it is now his ambition to engage the goddess of chance in South Africa. To finance this enterprise hard cash is necessary—and Heyst is reputed to have it by the bag. So Mr. Jones and Ricardo, accompanied by an anthropoid Central American who serves them as valet, cook and first murderer, set out in an open boat for Heyst's island.

What follows is melodrama so rapid, so gorgeous, so inordinate that I make no effort to reduce it to a dead summary. Thrill follows thrill in staggering succession. Conrad applies to the unfolding of it all the resources of his extraordinary art, and particularly all his gift for the dark, the threatening, the sinister. From the moment that Jones and Ricardo reach the crazy jetty, sun-blistered, purple-faced, half dead of thirst—from this moment to the last scene of all, with Heyst dead, Alma dead, Jones and Ricardo dead, the apeman dead and Wang vanished into the jungle, there is no halting or turning aside in this inexorable tragedy of blood. Put upon paper by a lesser man it would become a mere penny-dreadful, almost a burlesque. But as it is told by Conrad it takes on the Homeric proportions of an epic, a saga. The thing is more than melodramatic;

it is shocking, appalling, dreadful. Told, as I say, in a straightforward, almost bald manner, with no apparent effort to build up effects, it yet leaves upon the mind a picture almost as vivid and as haunting as that left by "Heart of Darkness." Jones, indeed, is a worthy companion for Mr. Kurtz. In both of them one glimpses depravity grow so vast that it takes on an aspect of the heroic. And in both of them, at bottom, there is humor—humor infinitely ironic, infinitely horrible.

Perhaps you read "VICTORY" in the February number of *Munsey's*, where it was printed with a few slight omissions. If not, then my advice is that you get the book and prepare yourself for a new order of adventure in fiction. It is, at one stroke, an authentic contribution to the Conrad canon, despite its novelty of plan and treatment, and an example of unadorned story-telling that challenges the most galloping of the best-sellers on their own ground. Perhaps, as I have hinted, it represents a deliberate effort by Conrad to yield something to the limitations of that wider audience which now drapes itself about him. But more likely it is an answer to those critics who have hitherto charged him with falling a victim to his own meticulousness. Frank Norris, it will be recalled, once played the same trick upon those who derided his realism and set him down as one incapable of managing a simple romance. That trick took the form of "Blix," a sugar-teat so charmingly sweet that it made all the other sugar-teats seem sour. In the same way "VICTORY" makes all the other thrillers seem empty and paralytic. Read it after "Nostromo," or after—well, say the latest Oppenheim: in either case it will hold you enthralled to the end and send you away with the feeling that you have given your time to something in the front rank of current English fiction. The one obvious blemish upon it is an omission. Why does Conrad forget the volcano, that glowering symbol of the whole sordid drama? One hears a good deal of it at the start. It domi-

nates and menaces Heyst's lonely island; it is the beacon that brings Jones and Ricardo to the crazy jetty. And then, unaccountably, one hears of it no more.

There is another Conrad book in the month's hatching, but this time it is merely a reprint. He calls it "A SET OF SIX" (*Doubleday-Page*), and it consists of five longish short stories and a novelette. The latter, here called "The Duel," was published separately as "The Point of Honor" in 1908, and the whole collection was printed in England under its present title about the same time. "The Duel" is one of the sardonic fancies that Conrad delights in. Two officers of Napoleon's army, coming to a dispute over a trifle, fight a duel. The result is inconclusive and they presently fight again. Shortly afterward they meet a third time, and thenceforth, for almost half a century, they are eternally at each other's throats. The original cause of their quarrel soon fades into the background; in the course of time, indeed, they actually forget it. But with sword, cutlass and pistol, on horseback and afoot, they pursue their incomprehensible feud with grim and laborious ferocity, until, in the end, they are so old that they can scarcely lift their arms. No more penetrating *reductio ad absurdum* of the punctilio could be imagined. It is a brilliant answer to those carpers who have denied Conrad a feeling for humor. He is, in point of fact, as profound a humorist as Ibsen, and he clothes his jocosities in the same deceptive irony.

Of the five shorter stories in the volume the most remarkable, perhaps, is "Gaspar Ruiz," a romantic tale of a South American revolution. It is a sort of by-product, I suspect, of "Nostromo," which preceded it in publication by four years. Both are attempts to depict the civilization of the yellow republics as it really is—not as the democracy it calls itself, nor even as a colorable parody of democracy, but as a medieval feudalism. This Gaspar Ruiz is a strong man who forces him-

self upward from the bottom—a colossal, gargantuan figure, terrible in both love and war. The manner of his death is astoundingly novel and shocking. Confronted in battle by a superior force and having no mount for his one piece of artillery, he—but I am not going to spoil the story for you by telling you too much of it. It will thrill you, I am sure, and so will “The Brute,” another of the six, and perhaps “An Anarchist” also. The two remaining are rather less striking, but Conrad at his feeblest is still vastly ahead of most other story-tellers at their best. A brief note by the author is printed as a preface to the volume.

Another welcome reprint is J. C. Snaith’s “BROKE OF COVENDEN” (*Small-Maynard*), which was first published half a dozen years ago. Mr. Snaith rewrote it last year and it is now printed with the original preface, omitted from the first American edition. The story, as most followers of current fiction know, is an ironical but good-humored picture of the typical English country gentleman, and, though much of its pungency must be lost upon those who are not intimately familiar with English life, it is nevertheless so persuasive and amusing a narrative that even an American barbarian must get a lot of joy out of it. What Mr. Snaith thus does for the English gentry, St. John G. Ervine attempts to do for the lower middle class of the North of Ireland in “MRS. MARTIN’S MAN” (*Macmillan*), though upon a much smaller scale. We have had heavy doses of Irish fiction of late, but it has dealt, in the main, with the Catholic peasants of the South. Mr. Ervine’s field is Ulster, and his central character is a shrewd and competent woman of middle age—a woman with all of the traditional Irish humor and optimism, but with something of the Sassenach’s stolidity superimposed. The author piles on details in a manner almost dogged; there is nothing of the free-hand impressionist about him; but the result is so vivid a picture that its meticulousness is forgotten.

Among the lesser books “THE FINAL

VERDICT,” by Sidney L. Nyburg (*Lippincott*) stands out. It is a collection of six stories and all of them deal with lawyers—rather destructively, it may be added, to the lawyers, and no less to the ancient science that they adorn. In one an alert young barrister crosses swords with a fair but anything but frail black-mailer, and beats her shamelessly at her own tricks. In another, a brother barrister, after clearing the skirts of a beauteous respondent in a sensational divorce case, falls in love with her and proposes to marry her, only to discover that the charges brought against her, though disposed of by his skill, were really true. In yet another a third young Choate, staggered by the pettifoggery that is laid upon him, pretends that he is ill with tuberculosis in order to be able to beat a dignified retreat. There is entertainment, too, in “THE CLIMBER,” by Amy D’Arcy Wetmore (*Remington*), the story of a successful storming of the barriers of what passes for society in this free republic. One gets glimpses in it of amazing impudences and almost incredible affronts. The pusher who would get on, it appears, must be a willing psychic flagellant.

Which brings us to the trade goods—“THE ADVENTURES OF DETECTIVE BARNEY,” by Harvey J. O’Higgins (*Century*), the said Barney being a preternatural youth of sixteen; “AMARILLY OF CLOTHES-PIN ALLEY,” by Belle K. Maniates (*Little-Brown*), a sentimental comedy of the “Mrs. Wiggs” school; “THE ROSE GARDEN HUSBAND,” by Margaret Widdemer (*Lippincott*), a sweet, sweet piece of confectionery; “THE VOICE IN THE FOG,” by Harold MacGrath (*Bobbs-Merrill*), a machine-made best-seller with the usual millionaire heroine; and so on, and so on, and so on. The trouble with Stephen Leacock’s “ARCADIAN ADVENTURES WITH THE IDLE RICH” (*Lane*) is that it is an attempt to poke fun at persons with whom the author apparently has little if any first-hand acquaintance, and so it misses the incisive humor of his “Sunshine Sketches” and too often descends

to mere clowning. The merit of George Fitch's "HOMEBURG MEMORIES" (*Little-Brown*) lies in the fact that he knows his Homeburgers inside and out. Here, indeed, is one of the truest and most amusing pictures of life in a small American town that I have ever encountered. Its humor is of that authentic sort which caresses vastly more than it stings—which loves, in other words, the thing it smiles at. If you have ever gone down to the depot (not *station*!) to wait for the 4.11, or run with Cataract No. 1 to an ice-house fire, or watched a tramp printer sticking type in the *Weekly Democrat* office, you will put in a pleasant evening with this modest volume—and go back to it, I venture, pretty often afterward.

(SENTIMENTAL INTERLUDE.—In my case it was the *Ellicott City Times*. Ellicott City hangs precariously upon the steep banks of the upper Patapsco, perhaps twenty-five miles from Chesapeake Bay, and is one of the oldest and hilliest county towns of Maryland. Most of its houses are built massively of nigger-head granite and go back to the thirties. Some of them, plastered against the hillsides, are four or five stories high in front and no more than half a story behind. There are authentic legends of pigs in their backyards falling down their chimneys, and not only pigs, but even children! Main Street runs down the bottom of a narrow gulch, and the B. & O. trains from Baltimore, coming up the crooked and beautiful Patapsco valley, cross the gulch upon an old iron culvert. At this crossing, with its roots in Main Street but with its roof topping the trains, there is an ancient warehouse—a structure so gaunt and so weatherbeaten that it almost suggests the ruins of a medieval castle. A long balcony, making out from the track level, clings to the side of it. Upon that balcony, back in 1888 or 1889, I acquired incurably the itch of ink, the *cacoëthes scribendi*, for at the end of it was the joint editorial room, business office, composing room and press room of the *Ellicott City Times*, and through an open window, on

lazy summer afternoons, one might observe a tramp printer sticking type, and Josh Lynch, the brisk young foreman, making up handbills for the farmers, and the farmers themselves being entertained by the editor. A lordly life! Gaping there, I fell in love with it—with the busyness and ease of it, the inky smells of it, the whole glamour of it. And so, when Christmas came, I intrigued for a printing press, and soon I was writing and printing a paper of my own, and ever since then, in one way or another, I have been hard at it. . . . Years afterward Josh and I were thrown together, and many were the Sunday magazine pages that we made up in hostile collaboration, and many the schooners that we emptied after work was done. A great adventure awaited us: the Baltimore fire of 1904. But that story I reserve for my autobiography. In it a whole chapter will be devoted to Josh's wild ride in a rickety express wagon with fifty galleys of hand-set type—a ride twice as thrilling as that of the Walküre and four times as worthy of immortality. . . . Both Josh and I have taken on weight in late years. We grow, in fact, more and more ovoid, bugly, sot. Worse, he has deserted the column rule and the foot-stick and is now a respectable bureaucrat in a plug hat. But I—well, I am enlisted for the war. I shall keep on eating ink until I die.)

Which brings us, by way of journalism, to the uplift, and so to "DRIFT AND MASTERY," by Walter Lippmann (*Kennerley*). Mr. Lippmann's position may be described, in brief, as one of skeptical faith. That is to say, he seems to believe heartily in the general aims and purposes of the uplift, but he has a good many disquieting doubts about most of its specific perunas. Thus in an earlier book, "A Preface to Politics," he delivered a powerful assault upon the celebrated report of the Chicago Vice Commission, exposing all the intellectual dishonesty in that singularly silly document and telling the bitter truth about the whole vice of vice crusading. And in this new book,

in the same forthright and convincing manner, he shows how little sense there is in the New Freedom of Dr. Woodrow Wilson or in the multitudinous sovereign balms of the Hon. William Jennings Bryan, that gurgling well of political, international and spiritual salvation. The trouble with both Bryan and Dr. Wilson, he shrewdly argues, is that the America they sweat to save is an America that long since ceased to exist. It is, in fact, the America of seventy years ago—a land of small industries, poor communications, isolated communities, petty ambitions, village jacks-of-all-trades. They allow nothing whatever for the enormous changes that have come over the nation. They do not sense the biological need of organization, specialization, combination, monopoly. They think for a compact society of a hundred million people in terms of the country grocery. They are blind to the fact that the democracy of Jackson is as archaic as the feudalism of the Twelfth Century.

It is not surprising, of course, to find imbecilities in the political theory of Mr. Bryan, for he is frankly a demagogue, a rabble-rouser, a mob-master, and to the vast majority of the persons he addresses the truth is both abhorrent and incomprehensible. But it is somewhat disconcerting to hear so much balderdash from the lips of Dr. Wilson, for he is a man of reflective habit and it has been the business of his life to differentiate sharply between the winds of current doctrine and the solid facts of human frailty and human necessity. And yet one finds him solemnly proposing the enforced disintegration of Big Business and holding this chimerical picture before the enraptured yeomanry: "Are you not eager for the time when your sons shall be able to look forward to becoming not employees, but heads of some small, it may be, but hopeful business?" What hollow and illusory words! How many young men of to-day, in point of fact, can look forward with any such hopes? Is it not obvious to every sane man that the era of one-horse enterprises is

done, and that the industries of the country are tending more and more to collect in large groups, and that the highest considerations of economy and efficiency work to that end? As Mr. Lippmann asks, "How many small but hopeful steel mills, coal mines, telegraph systems, oil refineries, copper mines, can this country support?" He might have added newspapers, shoe factories, trolley lines, department stores. Even the pettiest forms of trading are responding to improvements in transportation and the obvious benefits of central organization. The drug stores, grocery stores and cigar shops of the country are solidifying into chains. The parcels post is enabling the huge mail-order houses to reach out their endless tentacles. Even the barbers, cobblers and bootblacks are pooling their forces. In the face of this almost universal movement, so powerfully urged by natural laws, it is surely absurd to promise the voters of to-day that their sons of to-morrow shall be "their own masters, with the paths of the world before them."

But despite his impatience with such idle mouthing of words, this Mr. Lippmann, as I say, seems to be convinced that there is still something of utility in the uplift. His position, as I understand it, is not unlike that of the college professors and other master minds who dally with psychical research, that sweet, sweet madness. These gentlemen are disposed to admit that each and every one of their proofs of communication with the dead and damned is open to serious question, but they argue with great confidence that the *aggregate* of such dubious testimony should be sufficient to convince any intelligent man. Well, it may be so, but meanwhile it is a good deal safer and more convenient to consider each proof separately, and, when we come back to the uplift, each peruna. What of the direct election of Senators? Has it improved the Senate? Far from it! Even *Collier's* was lately weeping for the return of the Hon. Joe Bailey, the star of its Rogues' Gallery in the old days.

What of the initiative and referendum? The recall of judges? The direct primary? The vice crusade? Prohibition? Have these balsams cured the patient, or even relieved him? Hardly. Has trust-busting actually destroyed the Standard Oil Company? Would it be an advantage to the nation, in point of fact, to destroy it? Here, as everywhere else, the uplift has failed signally, and perhaps the sole excuse for it lies in its failure. Nietzsche once said the same thing of Christianity. A healthy race could not survive in the world that the early Christians dreamed of. The American people of to-day could not live in the padded and perfumed Paradise that the innumerable quacks of politics hold up before them, and enchant and ravish them with and collect money from them for.

Of the books that remain, the most important are devoted to the drama, and of these books of drama the most important are "POSSESSION," a volume of one-acters by George Middleton (*Holt*), and the fifth volume of Ludwig Lewisohn's complete translation of Gerhart Hauptmann (*Huebsch*). Mr. Middleton's six plays, like those in his two previous volumes, are less concerned with external events than with that subtler, more poignant drama which lies within. But the author is by no means a mere dramatist of the closet. On the contrary, he shows an apt hand for technical devices and a keen feeling for what is theatrically effective in character, and most of his little plays, given intelligent actors, would probably be very effective on the stage. He is distinctly a play-maker of serious purpose and honorable achievement, and I have no doubt that he will one day come into his own in the theatre. The Hauptmann pieces in the new volume are "Schluck and Jau," "And Pippa Dances" and "Charlemagne's Hostage." They reveal anew the amazing versatility of the great German dramatist. We have seen him, in previous volumes, challenging Ibsen, Maeterlinck and the Russians on their own ground. Here he actually essays to

write in the manner of Shakespeare, and with something closely approaching success. Mr. Lewisohn has had a hard struggle, and quite naturally, with the blank verse, but on the whole he has done it into English of a sufficient sonority. His introduction, as usual, is intelligent and valuable.

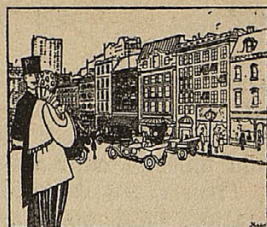
Other dramatic books of the moment are "VAUDEVILLE" (*Kennerley*), a series of grotesque drawings of music hall celebrities by Marius de Zayas, with indifferent text by Caroline Caffin; a new edition of "THE PLAYS OF EUGENE BRIEUX," by P. V. Thomas (*Luce*), with all the quotations from the plays put into English; "JESUS: A PASSION PLAY," by Max Ehrmann (*Baker-Taylor*); and a new edition, in one volume, of the plays of Oscar Wilde (*Nichols*). The Ehrmann piece, as I have noted, is called a passion play, but the representation of the Passion of Christ is confined to the agony in the garden and there is no attempt to show us Calvary. The aim of the author is to depict "the persons who founded Christianity stripped of supernatural embellishment" and "as simple, real, ardent Orientals in the throes of a great and impending tragedy." Two of the five scenes show incidents in the Temple, one shows Gethsemane, another the trial before Pilate, and the fifth the resurrection. In this last scene Joseph and his servants remove the body of Jesus from the tomb during the night following the Crucifixion, and there is a hint that the appearance before Mary is no more than the hallucination of an overwrought and hysterical woman. The new edition of the Wilde plays fills a beautiful little volume of 666 pages. The paper is much like that used in the Mermaid Edition of the old English dramatists, but the type is considerably larger. I know of no other such book, indeed, that is so plainly printed, and that holds out more charms to the book-lover. From the title page to the last leaf it is a truly delightful volume.

And so to make an end. Next month, the art ineffable—poetry.



In the Shops of the Smart Set

By Jeanne Judson



If you are interested in advance information not only about the mode, but about things novel, dainty and useful, to be found in New York's best shops, you will read the following pages with pleasure and profit. We will be glad to tell you where any of these articles can be found, or we will purchase them for you if you desire. Simply address your inquiry to The Smart Set Shop Department.

SIMPLY elaborate or elaborately simple?

Either phrase would adequately describe the spring fashions of 1915. They call them 1830 styles, but I question if any 1830 maid stepping from the frame of a French print would look quite true to type topped by a "Harlequin" hat or a "Jockey cap" of checked blue-and-white pussy-willow satin—Moorehead & Jardine models, which are being shown in a number of New York shops. The cretonne hats, or a flat disc of green milan trimmed with pink chiffon roses and finished with Georgette satin ribbon (another model from the same designers) would be much more in the picture.

A FLOWERY EASTER

There is nothing very original in the prediction of a flowery Easter, but the head of one of the smartest millinery shops in New York has predicted a more flowery one than usual, and brought forth proof of her statement in the form of hats of a gossamer daintiness, all of them adorned with flowers too fair for nature's building.

One hat, with a white organdie brim edged with black maline, has a black maline crown with a pekee-edged frill of white organdie and a half circlet of fragile blossoms both around the crown and beneath the brim. Streamers of black velvet ribbon hang over the tip-tilted back of the brim. Chiffon hats will be much worn. One truly Parisian model is a combination of purple flash-light satin with a chiffon brim trimmed

with pink flowers and long green peach leaves.

Tailored hats are smarter than ever, the sailor holding first place, as usual. The double-brimmed sailors are especially good. One of these has a wide lower brim of Georgette crêpe, with a narrower upper brim of straw and hair braid.

HOW TO WEAR YOUR SPRING HAT

"It's all in the way you wear them," said the woman who predicts a flowery Easter. Then she proceeded to demonstrate by placing my own chapeau at an angle which, alas, I shall never be able to duplicate. Many of the hats have a slight turn-up at the back. This is accentuated by pushing the hat slightly forward and just a wee bit to one side, at an angle entirely new and very fetching in combination with the short coats, full skirts and high collars of the mode.

The tailored hats, reproduced from Paris models, can be purchased for \$3.75 to \$20.

SMART NECKWEAR IS IMPORTANT

Neckwear comes next to hats, both in point of geography and in importance to the general style tone of the costume. The collars are all high, but they range from the uncompromising all-around stock to the widely flaring Gladstone. In one shop I found many very smart models at quite small prices. One, a wide flare of white satin, is finished with a black moire ribbon tuxedo

and sells for \$2.25. One, selling at \$3.75, is in vestee form, hand-embroidered net, trimmed with rose val lace and finished with a high stock.

Then there is a Gladstone of ecru Margot lace, open at the front and widely flaring. It is finished with a black taffeta four-in-hand and sells for \$2.95. A high satin turn-over stock in either black or white with button clasps and a long four-in-hand tie may be had for \$2.50.

Nothing could lend more chic to the tailored suit than do these collars.

Veils, too, are an important accessory this season. There is much coquetry in a thin mesh veil, adorned with velvet sprays or flowers and finished with a border of velvet dots, which sells for only \$1.50. Another, the "Tae" veil, is slashed up over the retroussé nose of its wearer and adorned with polka dots. It sells for \$3.75. A hand-run *tete de negre* veil of octagon or filet mesh, outlined with chenille cords, is \$1.25 a yard.

THE NEW FABRICS.

There are many new fabrics for suits and gowns this season. Among the most striking are the pompadour silks in flowered effects, large pink, blue or pale yellow blossoms, with just a touch of gray in the background, so that they combine charmingly with the soft grays and dull blues of the season. In wool suitings colors ranging from kahki to covert are the best. These colors are also seen in the pongee silks. Then there are simple hair-line checks in black and white or blue and white. Belle rose and the various shades of Belgian or Elizabeth blues are also good.

One importer shows *faille d'amour* silks with such sentimentally named colors as breath of rose, sunrise blue, *ivoire* and nymph pink; and *faille Samovari* silks in sand, *bisque*, mysterious green and *nubia* shades.

As to the manner in which the suits are to be made, one cannot be better informed than by two of the newest models being shown by a Fifth Avenue

house. One of these is in putty shade colored gabardine. It has a rather short coat and a fancy waistcoat of purple-and-white striped silk. The sleeves are a bit more than three-quarters length and are finished with cuffs of the striped silk. There is a collar of Madeira embroidery and very tiny side pockets on the coat.

The other suit is of transparent wool voile over checked or figured *crêpe de chine*. The coat is Eton, the sleeves just a bit less than full length. The only trimming is a clever arrangement of straps and buttons.

Mere words are heavy things with which to describe the fragile beauty of Milady's lingerie, which is more sheer and clingy than ever, excepting, of course, the petticoat, which has again put in an appearance. The prices, surprising as it may seem, are not in inverse ratio to the filminess of the garments. A brassiere of cluny and all-over lace, made with a deep V (very useful for evening wear), sells for only \$1.50. A camisole of white *crêpe de chine*, trimmed with galloon and threaded with wide pink satin ribbon, sells for \$1.98.

Just as every very advanced spring garment shown in February is passed the censors under the label "for Southern wear," so every particularly frivolous bit of lingerie is labeled "trousseau set." One of these, consisting of a combination and night robe, is of flesh-colored chiffon, trimmed with meline, thread lace and pale blue ribbon. The gown sells for \$9.75 and the combination for \$7.75.

THE PRODIGAL PETTICOAT

But to the return of the prodigal petticoat: it is circular and widely flaring and in most instances made of taffeta. One model which appears in sand, white, blue, black, green or putty color, is made with a habit back and side placket and finished with four rows of cording. It sells for \$4.95. Another model, also shown in many different colors, is finished with a double ruffle,

edged with rose ruching, a thing not seen for so many years that a debutante will not even remember it. This petticoat sells for only \$3.95.

A DISCOVERY

Quite by accident, in one of my expeditions among the shops, I made a really momentous discovery. It began by my meeting Mrs. ———, who has for some time been the envy of her friends because of the distinctly Parisian touch of individuality which all of her gowns invariably show. In an unguarded moment she confessed that she was on her way to buy an afternoon frock. Immediately I decided to go with her.

The secret of her toilettes is a little shop on Broadway which sells only model-gowns. These street, afternoon and evening frocks, designed to show the *dernier cri* of fashion, are displayed for a day or two on forms, and then bought by this shop and sold for prices that are as surprising as the gowns are attractive. One can buy two of these gowns, splendid in workmanship and materials, and with the distinguished lines so much desired by well-dressed women, for the price usually paid for one garment.

Mrs. ——— purchased two, an afternoon frock of striped pussy willow taffeta, with a peplum of plain navy blue. It was trimmed with small green buttons and jet. This frock was a Bernard model which would have cost over one hundred dollars in the ordinary shop, but for which she paid only \$45.00, and an evening gown truly *en regale*, made of emerald green taffeta and trimmed with gold fringe and pink roses. It might have sold for \$80.00 in another shop, but Mrs. ——— paid only \$49.00 for it.

MILITARY FOOTWEAR

There is a decisive little click to milady's heels as she trips down the avenue these days, which is easily under-

standable when one knows that she is wearing "The Infantry" or "The Artillery" pumps, models shown by one of the shops just off Fifth Avenue.

"The Infantry" is an afternoon pump of combined black patent and white calf. It has neither laces, bows nor buttons, but a tiny pointed tongue of white calf and a slotted tip and a high white calf heel.

"The Artillery," suitable for afternoon tea or dansant, is of black patent with a white side lace, a front seam diamond tip is stitched with white silk and the top edge is finished with white French grosgrain binding.

"The Infantry" sells for \$6.00 and "The Artillery" for \$6.50.

A PLACE OF BEAUTY SECRETS

Of course no shopping expedition is complete without a visit to that guardian of feminine secrets, the beauty expert. I included one in my itinerary—a famous house on Fifth Avenue, known most for its unique method of removing lines and wrinkles by muscle strapping treatments. These treatments are said to deal not only with outward effects, but to stimulate muscles and tissues into healthy natural growth.

In addition to the treatments, the founder of this house (a woman, of course) has for sale those powders, perfumes, creams and lotions which are really essential to the toilet of a beautiful woman, and whose scent, mingled with ephemeral, gossipy whispers, forms the very atmosphere of a "beauty parlor." Looking at the patrons of this house, one is convinced that art has done so much for New York women that Venus or any of those mythical "natural" beauties would feel quite *gauche* on Fifth Avenue to-day, even if clad in modern apparel.

NOVEL EASTER GIFTS

Easter gifts have quite supplanted the old-fashioned valentine in popular favor. One shop, famous for its de-

licious candies, is offering an imported novelty called the Easter bowl. It is made of Brittany ware, hand-painted in a quaint design, and when filled with candy sells for \$5.50. The bowl, empty, may be bought for \$3. It holds two and one-half pounds of candy.

This same shop offers wooden boxes adorned with the hand-painted figure of a charming Miss, dressed in the latest mode. These boxes filled with candy sell for \$3 for the one-pound size, up to \$9 for the five-pound ones.

For children there are delightful flower dolls, made of strong net and adorned with flower hats. These are filled with wholesome sweets for 75 cents each. They make excellent party favors.

A PRETTY TABLE DECORATION

In a shop where I had gone to purchase an after-dinner coffee service of Limoges china, for a shopper in Ohio, I saw a very attractive Easter table decoration. It is called the lily pond and consists of a plain crystal bowl with a glass block flower-holder in the center and for decoration a number of tiny blue sparrows, which balance on the brim of the bowl in an entrancingly natural fashion. In the thirteen-inch size, most suitable for the average dinner table, the bowl sells for \$2.50. The birds are 75 cents each and the flower-holder is 60 cents. Larger birds, to

be used as a center decoration, may be purchased for \$2.50.

If desired, one may substitute for the plain crystal bowl one of powder-blue Japanese pottery. These, in the twelve-inch size, sell for \$5, or an eight-inch bowl may be obtained for \$3.

NEW FABRIC FOR SPORT WEAR

While English fabrics are still very much favored for sport wear garments, especially the serviceable "Forestry" cloth, there is a new knitted American sport cloth which is receiving much attention.

This knitted wool cloth is being utilized in some of the most attractive of the suits being shown by a Fifth Avenue house devoted exclusively to the making of women's sport wear.

It is made of pure worsted yarn which has been thoroughly shrunk before making, and possesses warmth without weight, and the added advantages of elasticity and durability.

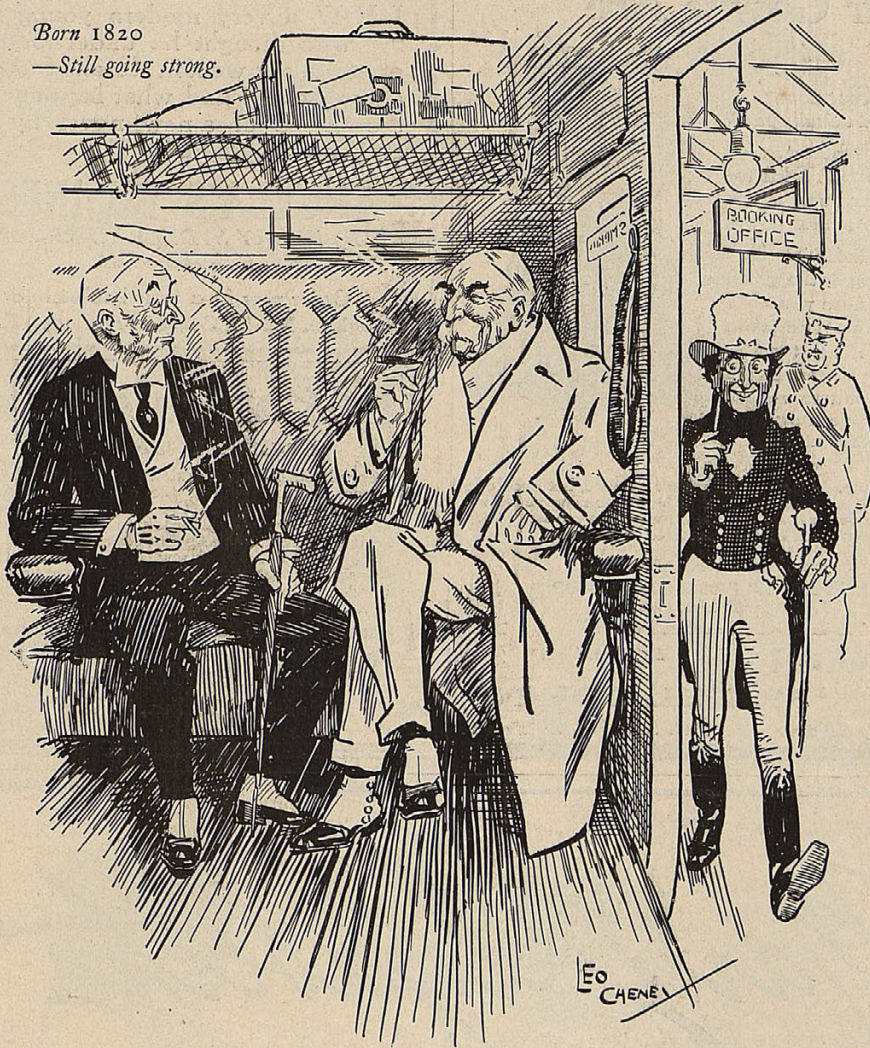
It comes in all the most approved colors, khaki, covert, putty, sand and the conventional blues, browns and reds.

Suits of this new fabric, with medium full, short skirts and much pocketed coats are not only correct in appearance but they are admirably adapted to the playing of golf, tennis and other outdoor games—something which cannot be said for all women's sport costumes.

No matter where you live you can always avail yourself of the best that the New York shops have to offer, through the Shopping Service which THE SMART SET has established. Or if you live in the city you can save time by making use of this department which is designed for the convenience of all of our readers. We will purchase anything for sale in New York City upon receipt of its retail price, or if the cost is unknown to you, we will price the same and hold it for you until the requisite amount is received. Every article described in this department is guaranteed to be as represented. This service is at your disposal free of charge.

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by treating the outer and under skins daily with the GANESH EASTERN BALM CREAM (\$3, \$1.50, 75c.), which thoroughly cleanses, and GANESH DIABLO SKIN TONIC (\$5, \$2, 75c.), to purify and close the pores, remove blackheads and reduce puffiness under the eyes.

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Order any of the above preparations by mail. Cheque must accompany each order.

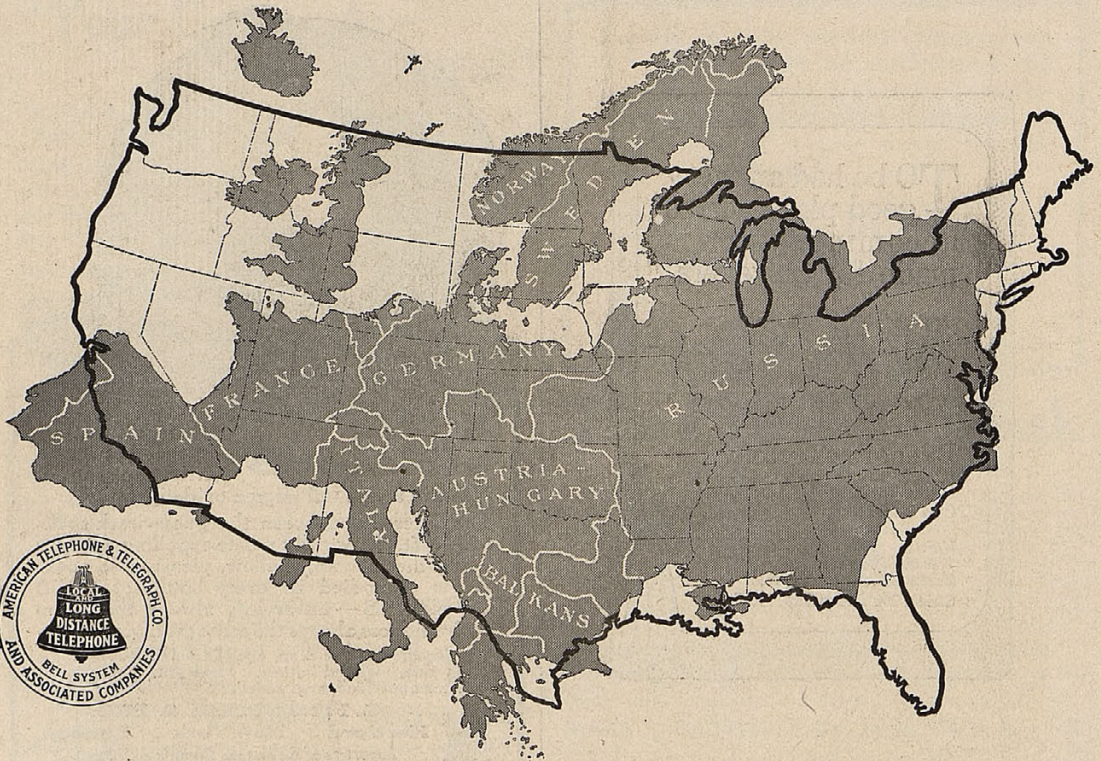
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A striking comparison between a homogeneous country and a heterogeneous group of countries is obtained by placing over the map of the United States the map of Europe. These represent the same area—about 3,000,000 square miles—if a few of the remote provinces of Russia are omitted.

Europe has the advantage in population, with more than four times as many people as the United States; in the number of large cities, with two and a half times as many cities of over 100,000 population.

Yet the United States, a comparatively young country, has outstripped Europe in the diffusion of civilization, because of its wonderfully greater means of communication between all parts of its area. The United States not only excels in transportation facilities, but it has nearly three times as many telephones as Europe, or about eleven times as many in relation to population.

By the completion of the Transcontinental Line we now talk from one end of this country to the other, while in Europe the longest conversation is no farther than from New York to Atlanta, and even that depends on the imperfect co-operation of unrelated systems.

Europe, with twenty-five countries and many different languages, serves as an illuminating contrast to the United States, with one language and a homogeneous people, despite the fact that our population has been derived from all parts of the world.

During the last forty years the steadily extending lines of the Bell System have contributed in no small measure to this amalgamating of different races. The latest achievement—the linking of coast to coast—has given greater force to the national motto, "E Pluribus Unum."

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65 cents is the standard price—there are more than a thousand double-disc Columbia records at that price, in every class of music, dance, vocal and instrumental.

Go to your nearest Columbia dealer to-day. Ask to hear any records you like from the big Columbia Record catalog—more than 4000 to choose from—he'll be glad to play them.

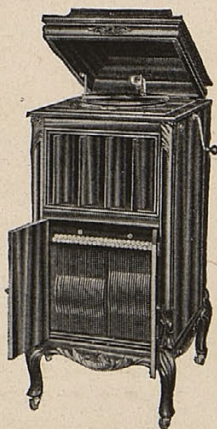
Columbia Records played on the Columbia Grafonola produce that superb beauty of tone that distinguishes the Columbia as the finest musical achievement. But Columbia records will play on any machine—their richness, fidelity and true musical qualities are a tone revelation.

Columbia Graphophone Company

Box D-308 Woolworth Building

New York City

Toronto: 365-367 Sorauren Avenue



Columbia Grafonola "Mignonette" with individual record ejector \$110; with regular record rack, \$100. Other models, \$17.50 to \$500.

FATIMA

THE TURKISH BLEND CIGARETTE



QUITE regardless of the fact that anybody can afford them, FATIMAS are smoked by more "able-to-buy-anything-they-want" men than any other brand. Obviously a tribute to the rare goodness of these cigarettes.

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